

THE RISING NAGAS

ASOSO YONUO

The Nagas living in the North-East corner of India bordering with Burma and China, have been in the limelight of history for centuries. This is partly due to the undulating topography of their country and its strategic position. The beginnings of their recorded history may be traced to the time of the Ahoms who invaded the Brahmaputra valley in the early 13th century.

In this work of assiduous scholarship, the author, who is himself a Naga, provides the first comprehensive and in-depth analysis of the subject. Starting from the early history of the Nagas, their relations with the Meiteis, Assamese, Burmes etc., he surveys all the historical events which brought the Nagas under the British rule mainly through military expeditions against their village-states, culminating in the war of independence in 1879-80. The changes brought out by the British rulers and the American Christian missionaries in the Naga hills, the background to the revolt against free India's government, the role of Phizo and other rebel leaders and that of foreigners in it, the events leading to the formation of the state of Nagaland and the current state of affairs are dealt with in detail.

The author's first-hand knowledge of his people and his talks with both the Naga leaders and the government representatives, make his picture of the contemporary Naga world vivid and rewarding.

This well-documented study will remain an authoritative account of the Nagas in particular, and of the Assamese, Manipuris, Kacharis, Mikirs, Khasis, Garos, Mizos and other tribes in general, who now inhabit this border territory.

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A Historical and Political Study

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Preface

The idea of writing an authoritative and objective book on the Nagas struck in my mind when a number of questions, often embarrassing, were put to me by foreigners as well as Indians as to who were the Nagas, how they lived, when and how they were subjugated by the British and how they are today in a free and democratic India since I happen to be a native Naga. Impelled by this external impetus and my spontaneous love for the people, I looked at the available sources for the answers and found that no one has so far answered these questions coherently and comprehensively. Having then decided determinedly to go ahead and define the scope of study and time, whatever obstacles may have attended in my endeavours, I began, over some years, to study the Nagas from my own toils and searches across the vistas of bygone centuries. Not only this, I met a number of the Naga people, discussed with them, sometimes trailed upon them to know for what I kept in my mind.

I have put serious and strenuous thought and efforts to outline to the reader the seedbeds of Naga civilisation, however primitive, unruffled virtually by external influences for centuries—least known to the outsiders who until now have taken or classified the Nagas as head-hunters, naked, bizarre, backward, poor, barbaric and rebellious in narrow and jaundiced sense. Nevertheless, despite errors and omissions in thought and solecism in covering of all the historical manifestations and reflections of deeper changes including important personalities involved whose dexterity, foresight and resolution manifested in the policy-decisions and actions, without casting any aspersions or innuendoes on them, I have put in right perspective all factual narratives or essentials including geographical background for which the reader requires a considerable thought and labour in one way or the other. My earnest desire has been that the reader should find this book as a befitting element of their curiosity to know about the Nagas from ancient period down to the recent insurrectionist activities against the Government of India. And since their revolt for independence, what to say, their simple savage life has almost vanished giving place to that of the politician, sociologist, scientist, and so forth.

I owe a deep gratitude to the authors of the existing books reflected in the pages which follow vauntingly. Finally, I would like to express my indebtedness to friends, colleagues and others who have

made known to me the facts and events about the people and things and helped me immensely throughout the writing and production of this book. Though all the facts have conscientiously been checked to the extent possible, in case of the conflicting and irreconcilable views and events, I have generally presented them with their sources. However, the mistakes of omission and commission remain mine.

Delhi,

ASOSO YONUO

Introduction

India is an interesting country in many ways, from antiquity to the present nuclear and space age. It is said when no man was there, it was the home of divine snakes, the river and mountain gods, fauna and flora. The earliest peoples probably the Negritos followed by Australoids, Mongoloids and others in the north-west, whose high civilization dating back to 2900 B.C. was unearthed in the excavations in Mohenjodaro and Harappa were here before the Dravidians, who were driven southwards by the Aryans who migrated somewhere from the Central Asia and settled permanently on the north which they called as 'Sapta Sindhu' or 'the land of seven rivers'—later on called 'India' by the Greek invaders. Afterwards, the Greeks, Sakas, Huns, Mughuls and Persians entered into India from almost the same routes worn by the Aryans. As the centuries rolled by, the fusion of these Caucasian races and a process of Aryanization took place in the north-western India.

On the other hand, successive hordes of peoples of Mongolian race from China and other parts of the south-east Asia, had passed to the arid mountainous regions and fertile valleys which by the process of time, came to be known as Burma, Meiteiland (Manipur), Kamarupa (Assam), Tippera, Bhutan, Sikkim, Nepal, Lahaul, Spiti and Ladakh in the Himalayas. Probably, many of these earliest migrants passed on into Bengal and merged with the Dravidians or Aryans who were already there, from the west and south. In course of time, the two races mixed together through marriage, culture, exchange of ideas and values, the outcome of which was a new brand of people who are classified by Risley as the "Mongolo-Dravidians."¹

These mixed people as we find them today predominantly in Bengal, Orissa, Bangladesh and western Assam, represent Mongolian but rather Dravidian physiognomy, having embedded in the Aryan civilization.

Afterwards, great hordes of Mongolian stock allied to the Tibetans and Bhutanese, speaking Tibeto-Burman and Mon-Khmer languages were migrating ceaselessly from 2000 B.C. onwards into Burma and Assam, through river courses of the Chindwin, the Irrawaddy and the Brahmaputra, from north-western China near the Yang-Tse-Kiang and the Hoang-Ho rivers. All these peoples afterwards known by different names such as the Kirata, Cine, Koch, Ha-

jong, Dalu, Garo, Khasi, Mikir, Dimacha, Arleng, Chutiya, Moran Kachari, Tippera, Lalung, Rabha, Mech, Lushai, Lakher, Pawi, Arakanese, Poi, Chakma, Kuki, Naga, Meitei, Adi (Abhor), Apatani, Mishmi (Mishing) or Miri (Micking), Ahom, Singpho, Khampti, Phakiyal, Aitonia, Turung, Khamjan, etc. settled in the valleys (Bramaputra-Surma-Manipur) as well as mountains and hills which rise from the plains of Bay of Bengal near Chittagong, Cachar and Assam on one side and from Burma on the other. Some other migrants like the Burmans, Arakanese, Shans, Kachins, Karens, Chins, Kayahs, Was, Palaungs, Mons had remained in Burma. However, all these tribes were not of homogeneous one, but a medley of different races divided into numerous tribes, sub-tribes and clans under the 'Mongolian' race, different in origin, distinct in language, diverse in physique, character, culture and society depending upon the peripheral geographical locality, although basically they were more or less the same having much in common affiliations, common heritage, religion, values, norms, common idea of liberty and decencies.¹ But they were, often as we find them even today, at loggerheads with one another and with the outsiders as well for which all of them had severely suffered in many ways.

Some of these divergent tribes including Adi, Mishmi, Apatani, Singpho, Khampti, etc., speaking different languages, professing animism but broadly classified as the "Nagas" by Assamese or Bengalis settled down in the upper basin of the Chindwin and the Irrawady, and from there or elsewhere they slowly and doggedly spread over Assam, Cachar-Mikir hills, Manipur and the ruggedly beautiful Naga hills, probably in the early centuries A.D., in search of scattered patches of cultivable fields and pasture lands.

These Nagas, with a fairly well-developed culture, established permanently small village-states similar to those of the Greek city-states on the hill and mountainous ridges or spurs, high above the valleys. But all of them were not conscious that they were one people—the Nagas, and failed to develop an integrated national political structure due to the geographical isolation entirely so difficult of access from one another and the subsequent rise of tribalism—a very low mentality within themselves. Thanks to this, numerous attempts made to unite all these village-states into one nation by delving into the mists of history, had not yielded any fruitful result and this may be called the dark age for the Nagas. However, having lived dispersedly primitive, they were often egalitarian

¹ See Ulrich Schweinfurth, *Essays in Political Geography*, Charles A. Fisher (ed.) London.

without extremes of wealth or power, taking into account that any individual did not starve so long as there was food somewhere in the village-states. Yet their life was rudely hard and mortality high. Being ocured frequently, the intermittent head-hunting and feuding among themselves by predilection, at any rate, existed in constant fear and suspicion of hostile neighbours, which gave not only disunity and apparent chaos but also a source of strength and means of attack to the invaders. Having isolated completely from the other human civilizations like Indian, Chinese etc. for years, owing to difficulties of impassable mountains, they were naive happy thriving on fresh air in their little world in consonance with their animistic philosophy, culture, customs and traditions.

Meanwhile, in the early centuries A.D., petty kingdoms of the Meiteis (Manipuris), Kacharis, Garos, Khasis, Koches, Tipperas etc. began to emerge as effective rulers in the plains and hill fringes without possibility of stretching upon the Naga village-states. In 1228 A.D., according to their *buranjis* (chronicles), the Ahoms, a Shan tribe invaded in the Brahmaputra valley and the subsequent rise of their kingdom brought a far-reaching relationship with Nagas marked, in turn, by hostility and friendship. Over and above, the conversion of the Ahoms and Meiteis—the two largest war-prone tribes, into Hinduism took different historical courses. Not infrequently, the Ahoms from the north and the Meiteis from the south of the plains invaded the formidable Naga village-states, across the girdle and rampants of mountains, conquered them, demanded from them tribute and attached whatever name appeared convenient to the hills, mountains, villages and peoples to whom they considered 'savages'. Sometimes they took away Naga women also for marriage. The invasions, of course, were very short, resulting in no permanent occupation and effective establishment of their authority and protage. This state of affairs continued till the fall of Assam and Manipur into the British paramountcy in 1826 as the causes of internal conflicts and external attacks from neighbouring countries.¹

In the 18th and 19th centuries A.D., the British who came in India primarily for commerce and trade embarked upon political ambition due to the vacuum created by the collapse of the Moghul power and subsequently extended their rule over the whole sub-continent including Burma and Sri Lanka (Ceylon). But how they came in the eastern parts and Burma was, after all, another remarkable story, say political expediency. After the Burmese were defeated and evicted from Assam and Manipur in the first Anglo-Burmese war

¹ See also Bhuyan, S.K., *A History of Assam, 1681-1826*. London, 1933.

(1824-26), the region was the scene of hostilities, chaos and raids which in the end resulted the British rule. Now they were forced to protect the Hindunised Bengalis, Assamese, Kacharis, Mikirs and Manipuris in the plains against the raids of the hardy Mongolian tribes particularly the Nagas, Lushais, Kukis, Abhors, Mishmis etc., and to fulfil their imperialist incentives. Eventually they conquered the wellnigh disunited Nagas through military expeditions undertaken several times, and side by side the American Christian missionary service took over there as the guiding influence after Rev. David Livingstone was sent to Africa by London Missionary Society in 1842.

In 1879-80 the Nagas disastrously fought against the British a war of independence, inspired by the phantom of freedom. In this war the Nagas were remorselessly throttled and their village-states were annexed into the thralldom of British India, dividing them into Assam, Manipur and Burma and ruled with a gun in one hand and a Cross in the other. Since then, when no alternative means were opened for them to husband their strength even after the Manipuris failed to resist the British in 1890-91, the Nagas succumbed obsequiously to the British and proved their loyalty to them much in the way as westernised Brahmin G K. Gokhale, a moderate political leader used to eulogise the British as the pioneers in civilizing the Indians. The Marwari, Punjabi and Bengali merchants and labourers also entered into the Naga Hills and Manipur and prospered as traders, shop-keepers, etc. on account of their skill, hard labour, austerity and sometimes cheating the indigenous ignorant. Meanwhile, the Nagas were hopefully converted into Christianity by the Baptist missionaries from the United States of America. It was under the inveterate influence and edifice of the church that the Nagas began to abandon their rude primitive animistic ways of life, giving place, among other things, to political consciousness and unity among themselves to achieve the destiny of a modern self-government under the British patronage and American encouragement.

The First World War (1914-18) broke out in the world's expanding industrial economy, scramble for colonialism and imperialism, military alliances and armaments, in which the Nagas rendered their service to the British government by enlisting themselves as Labour Corps in France while the Kukis¹ revolted against the British. This journey across seas and countries awakened the spunk of the Naga nationalism like other parts of India and they began to develop the

¹ See Soppitt, C.A.. *A Short Account of the Kuki-Lushai Tribes on the North-East Frontier Districts*, Shillong, 1887; and Shakspear, *The Lushai-Kuki clans*, London, 1912

concept of a Naga nation which they had not dreamt of before. As a result, during the visit of the Simon Commission to the Naga Hills in 1929, the Nagas demanded their independence outright and asked the British to leave them alone as free as before to decide their future whenever they determined to withdraw from India, while the Khasi Siems (Chiefs) pressed for the Khasi states. Further, it was made clear to the Government that in no circumstances would they (Nagas) agree to be governed by the plains people (Assamese or Manipuris or Burmese) with whom they were unfriendly, mostly after the advent of Hinduism and Buddhism in the plains. In 1930 the south-western Naga tribes unrealisably imagined that they could fight the mighty British and rose in an armed revolt against the Government for freedom under Jadunang of Zeliang tribe (Kacha Naga) whose leadership was taken over by Gaidiliu when the former was sent to the gallows and the nascent nationalism was stifled at the capture of the latter. The Government took cognizance of the crude fact that there existed ethnical and cultural distinctions between the hill tribes including Nagas and the plains people but pointed out that the Nagas still lacked the requisite qualifications for a separate state. As such, they were included in the list of "Excluded Areas" of India on par with other tribes to be governed by Governor at his discretion under the Government of India Act 1935. The other setback for the Nagas according to this Act was their bifurcation due to the separation of Burma from India in 1937. And the British government avowedly maintained the Inner Line Regulations promulgated in 1874 which intended to discourage the other Indians to come to the Naga Hills.

Again, in the Second World War (1939-45), the Nagas worked consistently for the Allied troops with sweat and tears to defeat the Japanese forces marching along with the Indian National Army led by Subhas Chandra Bose, the extremist nationalist leader, through Burma, Manipur, the Naga Hills, Assam towards Delhi for liberation of India from the British rule. On the other hand, some other Nagas including (Angami) Zaphu Phizo¹ collaborated with the Japanese and Indian National forces for the clandestinely unqualified promise of the Naga independence in the event of their victory in the war. Knowing with great satisfaction of the loyal Nagas' war-efforts which were mainly responsible for the Japanese defeat in the Naga Hills and Manipur, the British had a desire in mind to leave them with a legacy of self-government either in the form of a British

¹ The additional name bearing the tribe such as Angami, Ao, Lotha, Mao, Sema, Chekhesang etc, has been excluded in the book.

Crown colony or a trust territory under UNO by combining all the hill tribes of Assam and Burma or all the Nagas alone although for years they put minimal efforts for development of the Nagas. Subsequently, the Naga National Council was firmly set up under the British official patronage particularly of Sir Charles Pawsay, Deputy Commissioner of the Naga Hills in 1945 to bring political unity of all the Nagas for national freedom and it soon grew into a political party which dominated the life of the Nagas. But the following change of Government from the Conservative to the Labour and the events in the sub-continent of India proved no good fortune for the emergent Nagas in India and Burma.

In the early 1947 while the other minority peoples of India and Burma demanded autonomy, the Naga National Council strongly pledged for a sovereign independent Nagaland without the tutelage of the British, for which the British Attlee government reluctantly vetoed to further the case against the tottering strength of their empire after the war and against the Indian Nationalist opinion for one India only after Pakistan and Burma were separated.

Unfortunately the Indian National movement could not reach properly on the hill People of Assam and Burma due to British policy of exclusion for the people at a primitive stage of social organisation¹ and isolation. Rather seeds of future revolt like the idea of Crown colony or trust territory or so, in no time, sprouted in Nagaland. The issues arisen by the hill people of Assam and Manipur on the eve of the British departure were not answered except they were told to join soon the Union of India.² Ultimately the British government relinquished their rule in India, Pakistan and Burma in 1947 and 1948, once for all and thus the Nagas were left by the British in its own legacy of difficulties and pinned their destiny to the goodwill and leadership of Mahatma Gandhi and Jawaharlal Nehru to share the common endeavour to ensure their integrity in the ideals of fraternity, liberty, justice and equality.

Soon after, clouds of uncertainty ensued in Nagaland and negotiations between the Naga National Council and the Government of India started. The goodwill mission of the Constituent Assembly to Kohima on 20 May 1947 miserably failed since the Nagas did not give in their position. Sir Akbar Hydari, the Governor of Assam, went to Kohima, on behalf of the Government, watered down their key proposals and signed a nine-point agreement with the

¹ See Ben Whitaker, ed., *The Fourth World—Victims of Group Oppression*, Schocken, 1973.

² Terence Creagh Coen, *The Indian Political Service*, London, 1971, p. 33.

NNC in compliance with G. Bardolai, Assam's Premier on June 29, in which the Nagas were allowed to develop themselves according to their will in the field of legislation, executive, judiciary, education, agriculture and public works. The Clause 9 of the agreement was that the Assam Governor would have a special responsibility for a period of ten years, after the expiry of which the NNC would be asked whether it was to be extended for a further period or a new one was to be signed. This raised controversy of interpretations as to the radical Nagas to be meaning complete independence from India after the end of the stipulated period, whereas the Indian government had intended continual association of the Nagas having maximum autonomy within the Union of India.

Meanwhile, a delegation of the Naga National Council met Mahatma Gandhi on 19 July 1947 in Delhi and got assurance from him, which the Nagas latter on claimed to mean the right of self-determination in democratic process. But the Indian government in the flush of its newly-won independence from the British, bitten by horrors of partition and the experiences of Hyderabad and Kashmir, clearly stated that the entertainment of such a trite idea of independence implied only at best the right to complete autonomy and not sovereignty of Nagaland.

The adduced views of the Government as well as the extremist Nagas showed no sign of being prepared to make any concessions to the other. The Nagas held that they differed from the Hindus and Muslims in all fundamental fabrics of life and lived independently in their village-states before the conquest of the British. And they thought that the cessation of the British rule was a great recoil because it broke one yoke only to impose another upon them and wanted their inalienable sovereignty back along with the most fraternal and cordial relations with India. On the other hand, the Indian government gave grounds that Nagaland constituted an integral part of British India and under the Independence Act of 1947, the British transferred the sovereign power to Indians including the Nagas; accordingly, Nagaland became as much a part of the Indian Union as other parts of British India. The Government also stated that the aspirations of the Nagas were well provided in the Sixth Schedule of the Constitution and the question of granting sovereignty to Nagaland was not to be considered, and instead tried to make the Nagas conscious of the fact that they were Indians and they should be developed into Indian culture and political system under democratic socialism or socialistic pattern of society without even slightest sense of imperialism and exploitation.

After reaching such a stalemate on the kernel of sovereignty, the Naga National Council went in its own way, utterly impervious to any dire consequences, and worked tooth and nail for an outright independent Nagaland as the just struggle of the Nagas. Then they flatly reneged the Indian constitution, took the process of detribalisation as equivalent to process of assimilation and established their own Federal government¹, with the sole aim—"where there are Nagas compactly in their hills and valleys there is Nagaland" under the leadership of Zaphu Phizo. To stir up this revolting spark, the policy of stick and carrot, coupled with the delusive management of Bishnuram Medhi, Chief Minister of Assam, had almost allied waggingly the psychotic fear of the Nagas and forced them at an accelerated pace to take up arms against the Government of India.

The unadministered areas between India, China and Burma where the Nagas lived free without any control necessitated the presence of the Indian administration to protect the Indian Nagas from the raids of the Burmese Nagas owing to internecine conflicts and to bring them into Indian civilization. The extremist Nagas took such governmental measures as a proclivity of invasion in their territory and protested to the Government of India. Ultimately came up everywhere the sign of rebellion in the fast rising tide of their Nagaism² and passed through a tumult and predicament period there. In this way, fighting broke out far and wide, on a large scale in 1955 between the rebel Nagas, under the command of so-called "General" Kaito and the Indian government troops. The Government of India replaced the Assam Rifles almost manned by Gurkhas from Nepal with regular army troops in order to restore law and order and maintain territorial integrity through concerted action. The votaries of peace were suppressed, even violence and murder became the order of the day. On the whole, the revolt for independence may be viewed as a search for ethnical distinctiveness in the

¹ All the rebel Naga organisations like the Naga National Council, the Federal Government, Tatar Hoho (Parliament), the Naga Federal Army and other machineries attributed to them were not legally constituted bodies under the framework of the Constitution of India and other international community for which these were proscribed on 1 September 1972 by the Government of India.

² Broadly speaking, Nagaism is a system of life which characterises the fraternity of all mankind or universal brotherhood without distinction as to race, language, religion and geographical divisions, and which emphasises the relation between man and material world or Nature as part of each other in one facet. On the other facet, in a narrow sense, it jealously guards the distinctiveness of their race, life and honour from external aggression and assimilation.

wake of irritant relations of which the well-advanced Hindunized Assamese and Meiteis looked down upon the animistic and Christianized hill people as naive, primitive rustics or untouchables, while, in turn, they were taken by hill men as wily, corrupt and sophisticated scoundrels. Together with this background, furious instinctive nature of the Nagas and then craze for liberty along with the perennial conflict between the tradition and modernity, between Nagaism and the historical integration of India and between Naga economic progress and exploitation have also been in the way.

Rebel Nagas were not well-trained, well-disciplined and were quite inadequate in number to pose a serious challenge against the Indian government troops. In 1960 Z. Phizo went to U.K., with the assistance of Rev. Michael Scott to seek foreign support from western states and the United Nations for the freedom of the Nagas. Meanwhile, the moderate Nagas, hating violence, believing in the virtues of constitutionalism, democracy and rule of law, confiding in the ability of mass electorate, weaned away from the Federal government headed by its President, Scato Swu, a good natured Sema, and formed a People's Convention to stop bloodshed in Nagaland. First of all, as the virtue of the Convention, the Naga Hills district of Assam and Tuensang Frontier area of NEFA were separated in 1957 and administered directly by the Central government, which ultimately became a separate Nagaland state within India in 1963, excluding the other Naga areas in Assam, Manipur, NEFA and Burma, contrary to the expectations of all the Nagas for their political unity. Nevertheless, this state was given an implication of a considerable recognition of Nagas' struggle for independence. It also gave a gleam to the continuous agitation of the Garos, Khasi-Jaintias, Mizos, Kacharis, Mikirs and other plains tribal people for separation from Assam.

Unheaded to the creation of State, the extremist Phizoites held out for independence as an article of fundamental faith. All of a sudden, India had suffered tremendously due to the Chinese aggression in October-November 1962. At this time, the rebel Nagas too mustered their fighting power and strength by recruiting young persons to the Naga Federal army, by disseminating their independence and ideological propaganda and by importing arms from countries hostile to India, to pursue their objective. In spite of this, the Indian government and the rebel Nagas as well wanted peace and had for the first time, simultaneously demonstrated a willingness to meet and talk openly in an effort for a permanent political settlement of the problem with the good endeavours of an impartial third party if it would really promise best prospects of resolving it.

Accordingly, the Peace Mission initiated by Naga church leaders, composed of Rev. Michael Scott, J. P. Narayan and B. P. Chaliha painstakingly brought cease-fire to Nagaland to break a fresh ground for permanent peace and normalcy in September 1964 and tried zealously, however unsuccessfully in large measure, for a compromise settlement of the problem by negotiations.

India, once again, was taken in by Pakistan in September 1965. As in 1962 the loyal Nagas helped the Indian armed forces to repulse the foreign invasion and contributed their mite, although the rebels tried to strengthen their position also for peace and friendship. Yet the events followed in quick succession and the Prime Minister, Lal Bahadur Shastri died at Tashkent, where the agreement between India and Pakistan was concluded for peace under the auspices of the Soviet Union represented by its Prime Minister, Alexei Kosygin. Mrs. Indira Gandhi succeeded Shastri as the Prime Minister of India, put all her single-hearted efforts to win the rebels over, held a number of talks dragging on for years and passing through many phases, in the spirit of emulation, but inevitably fell flat to find a solution since the rebels as well as the Government of India stood for to their respective haggled standpoints. As a result, the transient Peace Mission—a mechanism through which peaceful settlement of the problem expected widespreadly, had jibbed at, dwindled in its earnestness and at last ran aground, although fragile and beleaguered peace truce in Nagaland continued. Had the Peace Mission's proposals been accepted, it would have taken, no doubt, a different course of Naga history.

In the meantime, the Mizos, another Mongolian race in the Mizo Hills district of Assam revolted under Laldenga, on 28 February 1966 against the Government of India for independence of Mizoland or Chinland out of the territorial pieces of India, Burma and East Pakistan. The Mizo National Front, in a sudden move, overran the district headquarters of Aizawl and Lungleh. The Indian army thwarted the uprising. But the remnant rebels became co-operated with the rebel Nagas.¹ Then, the rebel Naga-Mizos took initiative to flirt with the Chinese, trudged to and from China for arms, ammunition and training for their freedom, no matter how christianised they might seem to be, taking the assistance of the Kachins, Shans, Karens, Was, Mons and Burmese communists, whose relations with Rangoon were also as strained as those of the Nagas and

¹ See Cook, C., *Mizo and Naga Problems*, *Eastern World*; V. 22, No. 5-6, May-June 1968, p. 18; and see also, Reid, A.S. *Chin-Lushai Land*, Calcutta, 1893.

Mizos with New Delhi¹, despite the awareness of ill-treatment given by the Chinese troops to the Tibetans. The Naga-Mizos adopted guerilla tactics as almost the same as those pursued by the Viet-congs in Vietnam and the Pathet Laos in Laos. They open-secretly received moral and material support for their cause from Pakistan and China and brought large number of weapons etc., which were discovered by the Indian troops in 1968 or earlier. The Nagaland government and the church unctuously disgusted with communism, denounced the rebels' connection with Communist China to be endemic in their society and the Government of India strongly protested to China against its flagrant interference in the internal affairs of India and dealt the situation in co-operation with the Burmese military and administrative wings. India and Burma treated these separatist movements as purely internal problems which could be handled by the military forces matched by development programmes.

Meanwhile, more gravely, ill weeds or internal conflicts of great seriousness grew apace fatuously within the rank and file of the Nagas under constant factors of human ambition and rivalry coupled with an ample range of material gains and external influence to trigger attempts at the violent overthrow of rivalry. Ultimately the spirit of civil war rose up, stained with blood, faltered down to their leadership and proved disastrous to all concerned. A headlong dissenting group of "General" Kaito, once Phizo's right-hand man reacted scathingly against the Phizoite Federal government to put Nagas into the jaws of China, and oppressive activities of the Federal government against their poor Naga people in the shape of extortion of money, foodstuffs and forcible recruitment of young men and women to the rebel army. His faction introduced a bizarre imbroglio by forming an "Army government" and became a bleak block to the political negotiations going on in New Delhi. In other words, it was most assuredly directed against Phizo's hegemony and against the narrow, parochial elements of the concept of Nagaland alone, but it probably did not imply any desire to uproot the independence of the Nagas. This concerted movement was a great far-reaching effects to the Federal government since most of the fighting Sein and Mao men joined with him.

Now the Phizoites intoxicated with rage, grew great row and were headlong intent so much on destroying this "traitorous clique" as well as preserving their strength for the struggle of independence and power. "General" Kaito was mysteriously murdered by an

¹ See *Bangkok Post*, April 21, 1967; Balkans of Asia, *The Economist*, London, June 29, 1968, p.19; and Mullick, B.N. *The Chinese Betrayal: My years with Nehru*, New Delhi, 1971, pp. 111-13.

alleged Phizoite at Kohima in August 1968. In consequence, his heart-broken contending groups receded fast to the ground. "General" Mowu and his group returning from China to appease the breakdown of the rebels were arrested by the Indian troops assisted by the Kaitoists. All of a sudden, Khugato who was removed from the prime ministership by the Phizoites for the suspicious act of his secret talks with Mrs. Indira Gandhi as treason during political negotiations in New Delhi, made his own move with his brother-in-law, Scato Swu, former Federal President and "General" Zeheto and christened it as "Revolutionary government". Thongi (Chang) a Federal leader of Tuensang area also formed his own government. These two factions were motivated by the desire to settle their political problem with the Government of India peacefully. Moreover, the Revolutionary government arrested the former Federal President Mhiasi and his top aide Ramyo. Thus, oddly enough, the rebel Nagas hit one another with bayonets and sticks and set their own house into rival factions, dissonance and fire for power and policy that they so assiduously nurtured and built up. Consequently, many were killed and lynched, others who were in strength and leadership made a bid desperately for support from foreign countries without evincing interest in their ideological verbiage out of capitalism and communism and other conflicts. The Friends of Nagaland Society in America which stopped giving aid to Phizo after the Nagas' involvement with the Chinese had reportedly renewed its interest as probably evident from the famous Evangelist, Dr. Billy Graham's visit to Nagaland in November 1972 after the Sino-American relations were surprisingly improved by President Nixon's visit to Peking in February 1972 and fresh CIA contacts also seemed to be indicative.

Many other rebels were dismayed by the people apprehensive of the exhortionate consequences when quite a number of them were being undoubtedly pleased with the Indian government, however the hard-core Phizoites still swore by inglow of independent Nagaland and were tempted to avert their gaze from this dismal face. Now the emergence of Bangladesh as a friendly independent neighbour of India had shattered the sanctuaries or havens of the recalcitrant rebel Naga-Mizos and their movement to foment revolt of the Meiteis, Kukis, Kacharis, Mikirs, Tripuras, Khasis, Garos, Assamese particularly Ahoms, Bodos and NEFA tribes. Cease-fire in Nagaland ceased to exist in September 1972. The Federal government was declared illegal by the Government of India in the wake of the Phizoites' attempted foil to assassinate the Nagaland Chief Minister,

Hokishe (Sema). Internally, gross frictions, weak leadership, scramble for power, conflicts, intrigues, lapse from the traditional virtues, disease, low educational standards, variety of misrule, vile stench of corruption, shipwreck of justice, constant spur of poverty, whims of narrow-mindedness and seven deadly sins of bourgeois class unremittingly characterised the great bulk of the Naga people and fluctuated over the question of their leadership in this side or that side.

Nevertheless, taking the 1960 agreement ratified by the Nagas in 1969 elections as the final settlement of Naga problem, the Government of India along with the security measures allowing the underground Nagas to come overground has kept the door wide open for a lasting political settlement within the Union of India when peace is fully restored under the pro-Phizoite United Democratic Front Government of Nagaland with Vizol as the Chief Minister. The security forces, the Governments of Nagaland, Manipur, Mizoram and Tripura in co-operation with Bangladesh and Burma have started maintaining utmost vigilance to deal firmly the activities of underground Nagas, Mizos, Kukis, Chins, Chakmas, Arakanese and other Burmese rebels. Side by side the Government of India have been immensely carrying all-round development works, in more recent times, in the sphere of education, communication and transport, health and medical services, agriculture, livestock, breeding, forestry, industry, etc. Under all these circumstances and zeitgeist, to further expansionism of the Chinese influence and policy propelling the Nagas, is finding difficult, even if some Naga-Mizos have already accepted the Chinese well-knit Marxism-Leninism and are still there with furtive glances to plod their way into Nagaland, Mizoram and Chittagong hills from the rear at the right time to mingle with the dissent groups in Assam, Manipur, Meghalaya, Arunachal Pradesh, Tripura, Bangladesh and Burma. Such an attempt reflecting hardly the realities as a stick in one's gizzard, seems to fall in frustration as the formation of political maturity lacks far behind in the region owing to traditional antagonistic frictions, divisions and farragoes being more heightened by external factors.

But the future of these trouble-brewing areas having 2,200 miles of Indian frontier, of which 800 are with Burma, 800 with China and 600 with Bangladesh, hinges vitally much on the state of things in India, Bangladesh, Burma and China and calls for political foresight and vision on the part of the countries directly involved, since all of them have intractable tribal or minority problems¹ which

¹ See George Mosely, *Voices in the Minority*, *Far Eastern Economic Review*, March 2, 1967.

often become one of the consistently important themes throughout the history of the countries, although it is indeed difficult to reduce forthcoming events and circumstances to an order of guess by predictive hypothesis. Almost anything could happen and ample variety of things had already happened in the human history. Moreover, if these problems are not settled satisfactorily, the process of territorial integrity in the region will remain incomplete in one way or other. The Correspondent, Gial Vung comments: "The fate of these sub-national minorities was arbitrarily settled, temporarily at any rate, by the way in which the boundaries in the remote "inaccessible" areas were decided by the former colonial powers whose main interest was trade, not sociological or anthropological realities. If new borders are drawn which totally neglect the sentiments of the minorities directly involved, the result could be far more complicated frontier crises than at present."¹ However, it is a problem peculiarly difficult owing to the intermixture of tribes and nationalities and the national interests of the existing states, but is to be solved by these individual countries themselves, and if necessary by the avenues of their friendship, co-operation and understanding.

¹ Don't fence me, *Far Eastern Economic Review*, March 20, 1969, pp. 583-85.

NORTH-EAST INDIA

CHINA

LHASA

TSANGPO RIVER

TIBET

ARUNACHAL PRADESH

THIMPHI

BHUTAN

ITANAGAR

BRAMAPUTHA RIVER

GAUHATI

ASSAM

NAGALAND

MEGHALAYA

SHILLONG

KOHIMA

IMPHAL

MANIPUR

BANGLADESH

DALCA

TRIPURA

AGARTALA

AIZAWL

MIZORAM

MEITEIS

Mawlaik

Falam

Manywa

CHINDWIN RIVER

IBRAWADDY RIVER

MANDALAY

MANDALAY

MANDALAY

MANDALAY

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MANDALAY

AREA INHABITED BY THE NAGAS

BAY OF BENGAL

0 50 100 KM

1975

Land and the People

It is mother Earth which
gives life to everything ;
it is man that
makes heaven or inferno of it;
she keeps time to end Herself
and everything dwelling therein shall perish.
—A Naga Proverb

GEOGRAPHY

If we glance at the map of India on the north-eastern extremity, we find a number of spanned-out states and union territories, namely, Assam, Meghalaya, Nagaland, Manipur, Tripura, Mizoram and Arunachal Pradesh, which are linked with the rest of India by a narrow corridor in eastern Bihar and West Bengal, winding its way between Nepal, Sikkim and Bhutan on the north and Bangladesh, till recently called East Pakistan, on the south. And the people whom we call "Nagas" collectively are living in the present Nagaland, in the Naga hills of Manipur, in the North Cachar and Mikir hills, Lakhimpur, Sibsagar and Nowgong of Assam, in the north-east of Arunachal Pradesh, in the Somrat tract and its contiguous parts of Burma covering an area of some 20,000 square miles with a population of more than one million. "The areas or territories inhabited by the Nagas", J.P. Mills, an authoritative social anthropologist writes in *The Lhota Nagas*, "are bounded by the Kukawng valley in the north-east, the plains of the Brahmaputra valley to the north-west, of Cachar to the south-west and of the Chindwin to the east. In the south, the Manipur valley roughly marks the point of contact between the 'Naga' tribes and the very much closely inter-related group of Kuki tribes."

John Butler, a British explorer, describes roughly the topography of the Naga areas: "Of all the numerous tribes—Garos, Khasis, Syntengs, Mikirs, Kacharis, Kukis, Nagas, Kachins (Singphos) and Khamptis—inhabiting that vast tract of mountainous country which hems in Assam on the south, the largest numerically, as it is territorially, is the "Nagas". Under this comprehensive term is included the whole group of cognate races, dwelling along that broad stretch of hill and upland, which, roughly speaking, is comprised between

2 *The Rising Nagas*

the Kopili river on the west, and the Bori Dihing on the east, and which lies between the parallels of 93° and 96° longitude. This tract extends northwards to the low hills bordering the alluvial plains of the districts of Lakhimpur, Sibsagar and Nowgong, and overlooks the broad waters of that noblest of all Indian rivers, the sacred Brahmaputra.”¹ Again, the *Census of Assam* (1901) also mentions that “the Naga hills extend geographically eastward to the Patkai, but the Dikhu is our frontier for political purposes, government resolutely declining to undertake the thankless and costly task of keeping order amongst the tribes living on the further side of this river.” The Naga area in Burma, according to Stevenson, covers “from the Patkai range in the north to the Thaungdut state in the south and from Assam frontier in the west to the Chindwin river in the east.”² T.C. Hodson, in his book, *The Naga Tribes of Manipur*, writes: “The State...contains about 8,000 sq. miles, of which 7,000 sq. miles are hill territory as opposed to the valley territory and are inhabited by Naga and Kuki tribes—hill people who number slightly more than 1,00,000. While accepting with due reserve the familiar distinction between Nagas and Kukis, it may be pointed out that the tribes commonly classed together as Naga and Kuki occupy definite areas in these hills.”

But the present state of Nagaland covers an area of 6,366 sq. miles with a 5,15,561 population (1971). It is one of the magnificent mountainous systems that extend from the Chittagong hill tracts to the Patkai mountains at a point where the range is joined by north-eastern offshoot of the Himalayas. It is bounded on the north-west by Assam, on the south by Manipur, on the east and north-east by Burma and Arunachal Pradesh. Adjoining a part of the Chin hills and Arakan Yoma mountain system, Nagaland comprises three massive mountain ranges which run irregularly parallel to one another from north to south—the Barail, the Naga and the Patkai rising from 2,000 ft. to Saramati, the loftiest peak which is 12,663 ft. above sea level in the Tuensang area of the Patkai range overlooking Burma. It stands on the difficult frontier as covered with forest upto the last thousand feet or so and above that with snow in winter which lasts until the end of April. The Barail range broadens steeply out into Nagaland and western Burma from the north-west of Manipur via North Cachar and culminates in the peak of Japvo, 9,890 ft. in altitude, a little to the south of Kohima. The other important peaks are Padna (9,156 ft.), Kapu or Ezupu and Kapamezu (7,970 ft.). There

¹ *Journal of Asiatic Society*, XLIV, No. 4, 1875, p. 307.

² *The Hill Peoples of Burma*, London, 1944, p. 15.

are beautiful glacial gorges with frowning, steep wooded sides, running upto the crest of Barail which consists of, for the greater part, wall of grey rock and precipice. From this elevated mass transverse, spurs connect the neighbouring parallel ranges which are at intervals widened apart so as to enclose the fertile cultivable ravines and valleys flown by the rivers. Here it is met by the meridional axis of elevation prolonged from the Arakan Yoma, and from this point the main range runs in north-north-eastern direction to the south; a low depression in the mass of hills reaches to the portion of the alluvial valley of Manipur. Thence the Naga ranges forming bewildering series of more or less parallel ranges in Manipur enclose the Imphal valley which rests at an elevation of 2,500 ft. above the sea level and ends in the south-west at the Mizo hills and Sylhet which again contains a typical alternative arrangement of parallel ridges and valleys.

From the Mizo hills there lies a low plain in the Tripura-Gachar region pierced by a series of long-drawn sharp spurs. This area forms virtually a part of Surma valley built by the detrital materials. In the absence of sufficient slope the surface of the area is dotted with a number of lakes and marshy tracts. Then there are Chin hills, ranging between 3000 and 10,000 ft., Tripura hill and the Chittagong hill tracts. Further south, the mountainous region continues through the Arakan hill tracts and the Arakan Yomas which are not so high but still form an effective coastal strip to the north and south of Akyab until it finally sinks into the sea at Cape Negrais. The frontier hills of the Upper Burma march from north to south with that of China, of Indo-China where they reach out to the Mekong river and of Siam in the south. The perimeter hills generally take the large tangled form of spurs and serrated ridges occasionally rising into conical peaks and flattened cliffs of bare rocks but interspersed with barren plains and clothed, naturally for the most part with dense ever-green and often inaccessible forests; scrub and grass jungle are in great profusion with its tropical rainfall, heat, insects and diseases but because of their steepness, many parts remain bare breaking the usual monotony of the dark-coloured mountain scenery. At some places on the gorges, oaks and pines grow while on the lower reaches valuable trees like Gomari (*Gmelina arborea*), Poma (*Cedrela Toona*), Sam (*Artocarpus Chaplasha*) Uriam (*Bischofia Javanica*) etc. But then the forests are not of much commercial value for which one reason is *jhumming*. This method of raising crops necessitates periodical clearance of an area of all forest and foliage; another reason is that the trees are separated from one

another by deep gorges through which a stream or river wends its way to the plains in the north of Assam or Burma.

The soils of Nagaland are of two types, namely ferruginous red and laterite. The ferruginous soils occupy the major part of Nagaland; the clay in the red soil has developed kaolinitic structure. Their main characteristics are light texture, porousness and friable structure. The laterite soil is found in a small area lying along the border of Sibsagar district of Assam. The soil is compact to vesicular mass in sub-soil and is composed essentially of mixture of the hydrated aluminium and iron oxides. Chemically, it is deficient in potash, phosphoric acid, lime and iron oxides of alkali and alkaline earth metals. The central plain of Manipur being the flood plains of rivers that drain it, has thick deposits of sands, clays and silts of fluvio-lacustrine origin with their usual characteristics. The soils in the Naga-Kuki hills of Manipur, Mizo hills and North Cachar hills are almost similar to each other being usually associated with the reddish loam. The foothills are covered with gravels and sands. In the Tirap and Lohit districts of Arunachal Pradesh the soils found on foothills are diluvial in nature being either loams or sandy loams mixed with pebbles that are brought down by rain from higher slopes. Soils in the valleys are clayey alluvium and rich in organic content with higher moisture-retaining capacity.

There are a number of rivers and streams in Nagaland, among which the largest being the Doyang. It is navigable with gondola or boat within a few miles only, because of the blocked rocks at Nabha. Another important river Dikhu which too is navigable for a short distance only, is a tributary of the Brahmaputra. Other rivers are Jhanzi and Disai which flow north-east through the plains of Sibsagar into the Brahmaputra and Tizu with its tributary, the Lanier falls into the Chindwin. The Barak river springs from Yumai or Liyai village in the Mao Naga area, Manipur and flows through Cachar, Sylhet and Bangladesh before it falls into the Bay of Bengal. The chief tributaries of the Barak are the Jiri, Jatinga, Sonia, Dhaleswari and Katakheel.

The climate of Nagaland is generally cool, genial and salubrious. At Kohima the temperature seldom rises above 80° But during the rains the valley and the lower ranges occasionally break malarious. It receives a fairly heavy monsoon rainfall from mid-May till early October, with about 76 inches a year at Kohima but further north at Wokha and Tamu it exceeds 100 inches. During the monsoons, jungle paths vanish in the mud, rivers become flooded, streams swell quickly into raving torrents, uphill and down valley means

running mud right upto knees; slippery ascent becomes difficult to climb, assault of sandflies, ticks, mosquitoes and leeches is there to gorge human blood while the threat of snakes and wild animals is ever present. From October, winter begins with variable winds. During the cold weather, usually in the morning hours, a dense woolly fog rolling up and down appears in the river valleys from the Brahmaputra against the northern slope of the Barail and all the outer belt of hills including that of Imphal. There is air drainage in the hills as well as in the valleys and a little rainfall during the winter also. Strong earthquakes happen occasionally in Nagaland as mountain formations go on. But those of 1897 and 1952 were the severest. Fauna and flora of the Sikkim type are as rich here as in other parts of Assam.

A little is known about the potential mineral deposits of the land although coal, oil, gold, silver, copper, iron, various other kinds of semi-precious stones—all seem to be present though the exploration works have not yet been properly carried out. But according to the existing data, the mineral resources of economic value are available only in Nagaland, Manipur, Tripura and North Cachar. In Nagaland tufa lime deposits have been found in the Sijju valley to the east of Kohima while lignite in the hills near Nichugarh. Some coal has also been discovered near Aakey village and in the hills through which the Disai river diverges into the plains but it is of inferior quality. Among the minerals available in Manipur are iron ore, copper ore, rock salt and limestone. Iron ore is found at some places in the Imphal valley while copper is exploited near Ukhrul rock salt and limestone are fairly abundant at many sites. The deposits of limestone are also found in the hills of North Cachar.

Different kinds of trees, plants, herbs and grasses are available for timber and medical purposes. Indigenous tea grows all along the low northern slopes at the foot of the Barail. The wild animals found in the forests around Assam and other adjoining areas in Burma are elephant, rhinocero (particularly in the Dhansiri valley), mithun, bison (bosgauru), tiger, leopard, bear, badger, serow, sambar, barking deer, gooral, squirrel, rat, monkey, langur, hoolock, porcupine, pangolin, otter, the flying lemur, etc. There are different kinds of birds which are almost common to all the Himalayan regions, Burma and China, among which peacock, deo derrick, derrick pheasant, argus pheasant, jungle fowl, hill partridge, etc. are mentionable. Nagaland has the rare birds like Indicator xanthonotus between 5,000 and 8,000 ft. altitude.

Kohima¹ which lies on the summit of a ridge about 5,200 ft. above the sea, with great panoramic views is the capital of Nagaland. Nagaland for administrative purposes is divided into seven districts namely, Kohima, Mokochung, Tuensang, Phek, Zunheboto, Wokha and Mon whereas the other Naga areas are attached to Assam, Arunachal Pradesh, Manipur and Burma.

PEOPLE

The Nagas are one of the Mongolian racial groups found in Assam, Meghalaya, Tripura, Mizoram, Manipur, Arunachal Pradesh, Burma, Bangladesh, Bhutan, Sikkim, Nepal, Tibet, the fringe of the U.P., Himachal Pradesh and Kashmir of the Himalayan tracts. They have their distinctive tribal names with a number of sub-names, about fifty, of which better known are Angami (Tengima), Chakhesang (Chakroma)², Ao, Sema, Rengma, Lotha, Kuki, Chang, Konyak, Khienmungam, Sangtam, Yimchunger, Phom, Damsa, Zemai, Liangmai, Rongmai (three combined Zeliangrong)³, Mao (Shipoumai)⁴, Maram (Maharamai), Thangal, Tangkhul, Maring, Kom, Chiru, Anal, Moyong, Mongsang, Lamgang (Pakan), Nocte, Tangsa, Wancho, Singpho, Khampui, Haimi,

¹ The word, 'Kohima' is derived from the word, 'Kew-hi naa', meaning 'the men of Kew-hi', a plant grown on the mountain side; otherwise, it was called Thigoma.

² It is combined of Chakru, Khezha and Sangtam sub-tribes.

³ They are sometimes called Kabui or Kacha or Kachai (forest).

⁴ Poumai or Shipoumai are the descendants of Mao, Pao and Leo who were traditionally supposed to be the three sons of *Pou* or *Shipou*. Mao has been applied only to the present sixteen villages—Mao west although it is known to all. Since then, Paomata, Leopaona and Chilevai (the latter, migrants from Mao, Pao, Leo and Tangkhul groups) have refused to get themselves identified with Mao and aptly insist on "Shipou" for the whole people now known by Mao or refusing which Poumai is to be claimed for recognition. Otherwise there is much common in language, customs and culture except minor local differences. Again, Maos were considered to be Angamis and known to them as "Sopvoma". (See, Mrs. E.S. Grimwood's *My Three Years in Manipur*). Angami is also a corrupted word derived from "Ganmei" or "unconquered", the name by which the tribe has been known to the Meiteis (Manipuris). But the name by which Angamis call themselves in the central part is, "Tengima" and the remaining, "Chakroma". It is a fact that the Angamis migrated to their present villages from Mekhreina or Makhrepfu in Mao area. The early migrants of Khonoma who are said to be from Khumai or Sokhama (Tungam in Manipuri), were brothers of the same parents. In the early periods their links were kept in traditional way, for instance, exchange of pieces of meat and call at occasions of feast which they have abandoned now.

Htangram, Rangpan, Para, Kalyo Kengyu.¹

The population of the Naga is over one million, the areawise break-up being: 5,15,561 in Nagaland, 2,50,000 in Manipur, 70,000 in Tirap district of Arunachal Pradesh,² and some lakhs in the North Cachar-Mikir hills, other contiguous places of Assam and Burma.

Generally, the Nagas bear the Mongolian physical features and cultural traits. They have a broad head, complexion light, dark light and golden brown but black too with a yellowish tinge, hair black, straight, coarse, vigorous, wavy and negrito frizzy in some cases, with scanty hair on face, stature short or below average in the standard way, nose fine to broad, face characteristically flat, eyelids often oblique. Even though, we find considerable variations among the Nagas, some like Angamis, Chakhesangs, Tangkhuls, Maos and Marams have Caucasian or Aryan-like traits, most of them about six feet high or more, broad shouldered and regular built, Semas, Aos, Lothas, etc., short and some other sturdy. Some Nagas are with athletic sinewy frames, hideously wild and ugly visages; the faces and bodies of the Konyak, Chang, Ao, Phom and Sangtam tribes tattooed by pricking the juice of the bela unit into the skin in a variety of fantastic figures and which they have abandoned completely now. The women are rarely beautiful because of hard work and exposure coupled with the travails of the maternity which make their skin rough and wrinkled. They are fine, stalwart, cheerful, jovial, frank, hospitable, friendly, humorous and devout. Fond of different poetic songs of the indigenous products, which are bequeathed from their ancestors, they also like their own race and are, of course, fierce love of liberty, independence and universal

¹ The reader is not to be confused for the word, "Nagaland", which implies in two senses, one broad i.e. the land where the Nagas are between the Chindwin and the Brahmaputra and other in a narrow sense, that is legally constituted Nagaland by the Government of India. The loyal Nagas are working to get themselves united into one administrative unit in India while the underground Nagas are for independence of whole Nagaland.

² A number of Assam Rifles veterans, mostly Nepalis, road construction and maintenance workers have settled in the extreme north-eastern section near Vijaynagar while tribal refugees from Burma mostly Kachins from Lisu area (since 1963) and Hajongs and Chakmas from the Chittagong hills of East Pakistan (in 1965), in Miao area of the Tirap frontier, although Tibetan refugees were unsettled here for the fear of Chinese agents in the guise of refugees, before they were moved to camps in Sikkim, Bhutan, Uttar Pradesh, Himachal Pradesh or to the Tibetan resettlement villages in Karnataka, Orissa and Madhya Pradesh.

brotherhood. They are courageous and tenacious when it comes to defending their family and fatherland. They are not only industrious, steady, and thrifty but also great nature-lovers, good entomologists and botanists having their own names for every animal, insect and plant. Yet differences in nature and temperament are striking as the Angamis, Chakhesangs are noble, vindictive and truculent and Aos litigious, Lothas unsociable and sulky, Semas generous and improvident, Rengmas good-natured, peaceful and honest, Maos philosophical, and Tangkhuls forward, etc. But by nature they are waggish and facetious in social life—a characteristic found almost in Mongolian race. They are usually unclean and unmannerly in taking their meat, food, drink and in other things. They are very fond of intoxicating drinks like variant of ricebeer and wine. They drink daily some quantities of ricebeer which is made of such a consistency that it serves them for water. Their staple food is rice, vegetables and pulses; they eat all kinds of animal flesh including entrails such as beef, buffalo, pork, bison, deer, dog, monkey, frog, gin (big lizards), python, snake, fawn, fish, etc. as common articles of food. They have never drunk milk in the past for reasons unknown, although they have now begun taking milk. It is believed, as some stories tell us, that once upon a time among some tribes there were cannibals. They chew and smoke their own tobacco.

The Nagas speak their own tribal languages and dialects which vary widely from one another even though their languages, from sufficient evidences, are derived from the same cognate stock in the remote past. Strangely, a language spoken in one village is not easily understood by another village in a very near vicinity. Today, Assamese, Manipuri, Hindi and English are the media of expression among the Naga tribes as well as the outsiders. English is not only the official language of Nagaland but also the medium of instruction and examination in schools and colleges.

According to different philologists the languages and dialects of the Nagas belong to the Tibeto-Burman and not to the Siamese-Chinese or the Sino-Tibetan language spoken by the Phakials, Khamptis and a few Ahoms or Tibeto-Chinese speech family. They have much in common more or less with the languages of Tibetan, Himalayan, Upper Assamese, Bodo, Kachai, Mizo-Kuki-Chin and Burmese, though philologically, the origin of the Tibeto-Burman language is traced from the north-western China lying between the Huang-Ho and Yang-tse-kiang rivers. This Tibeto-Burman language "spoken from Tibet in the north to Burma in the south; and from Baltistan

in the west to the Chinese province of Szechuan and Yunnan in the east"¹ is substantially different from the Khasi-Jaintia language of the Mon-Khmer (Austro or Austro-Asiatic) speech family spoken by the Bodo race. But there are, J.H. Hutton writes, "distinct traces of the Mon-Khmer language in river and place names and there are words such as some of those for 'taboo' which can be definitely linked up with Austro-Asiatic and oceanic words. This, taken with some aspects of megalithic culture, in particular that of the Kacha Naga of south-west Manipur and the North Cachar hills, with the occurrence, in one tribe at any rate, of a shouldered hoe of typical Khasi pattern, with traditions, customs and legends strongly suggestive of a submerged matrilineal element, and with some other elements of folklore both Naga and Meitei, suggests very strongly that a population of Mon-Khmer affinities has at one time occupied the area, or parts of the area, now occupied by the Naga tribes and is to some extent represented in the present population."

The Naga languages are so difficult and complex that "no one", writes J.P. Mills in *The Rengma Nagas*, "but a specialist can ever hope adequately to analyse Naga languages, with its tunes, its rich vocabulary and its nuances of meaning that are so hard to grasp."

The Nagas do not have their own original script, since they lost, some say, the written script recorded on an animal skin which was devoured by a dog due to their negligence while others say that they had cooked, by mistake, the piece of an animal skin on which their script was written, and ate it up. After that their script could not be rewritten on account of nomadic habitation while the Meiteis like the Tibetans, Chinese, Dravidians, Aryans, Arabs, Greeks and Romans still maintain, with great care, their writings in their own script on religious and other subjects than historical chronicles that we are able to see them today. Now, the Nagas have adopted the Roman script as the only way out to fill the gap in communication among themselves and the others. Yet, it is amusing to note how well and how long the Nagas have managed to keep the originality of their languages, barely corrupted without a well-developed script.

SOCIETY

The structure of the Naga society is basically rural in character. Overlooking the valleys and fields, the Nagas build their villages on the spurs of different bleak hills running down from high ranges

¹ Grierson, *Linguistic Survey of India*. Vol. III, Part I, Delhi, Reprinted 1967, p. 1

varying much in size as some contain as many as thousand houses while others not more than fifteen. These village sites were gingerly chosen for strategical advantages from attack in head-hunting war, though by doing so, they suffer much in obtaining a supply of water. They were strongly fortified and well-guarded by elaborately planned wooden gates with heavy stones fencing for defence against the enemy attacks and incursions as they are found today from disappearance. In ancient times, it is said that the huge plank gates were constructed with grand ceremonial feasts and gennas by carrying the cut-off head of a man from enemy village in great triumph through the new built gates. The houses are built in close huddle in spite of frequent destruction by fire and each house is constructed on a site owned absolutely and exclusively by the householder or clan with lavish use of mighty posts of excellent timber obtained from the hill forests; rafters and forts of solid beams are used and the whole roof of it is covered with thick layers of thatch laid upon trellis of bamboos almost touching the ground on sides. Instead of thatch, many wealthy Nagas, in recent years, have favoured roof of galvanised corrugated tines, cement and timber for durability and security against fire. Particularly among the Angami and Mao Nagas, the houses of the rich who raise their social states high by feeding of feasts to the villagers and relatives by ricebeer and meat are built with its hand-painted rafters and hand-hewn facade carved ornamentally in a stylish buffalo head-design. The construction of such houses by commoners is prohibited by custom. The villagers are custom-bound to help in building the houses of the kings or chieftains. Generally, the houses are large with wide courtyards in front in which fowls, dogs, pigs and cows are bred and many household duties such as pounding rice, weaving and spinning are performed. The rich or important men decorate the gable and the walls of split bamboo of their houses with massive boards of horns and animal skulls. The cows are accommodated either inside the house or in a small fenced-off verandah portion. Pigs are sometime kept in the little enclosure by the hut, but the fowls roost on the rafters. Every house keeps at least one paddy pounding bench which is taken from exceptionally large trees and the installing of this ensures ceremony. The kinsmen and relatives go en masse to drag the heavy bench from the forest, which often lies at a distance

¹ The reader is to note that their old ways of life, beliefs, customs, traditions, etc, however continuously declined and almost entirely changed with the British rule, Christianity and the new administrative reforms introduced by free India, are hitherto in substantial practice in one form or another for which they are put in as they are.

of several miles. It is fetched home in triumph to the accompaniment of singing, dancing and the consumption of liquor provided by the owner.

Being the fundamental basis of society, family comprises the father, mother, unmarried daughters and sons living in the same home; among them father is the head of the family who performs certain political, social and religious duties. A son sets up a separate family after getting married whereas daughter goes to another clan leaving her original clan on marriage. The clan comprises a group of consanguineous families descended from a common ancestor by whose name the clan is known on the patrilineal and exogamic line. Then a number of clans (combined together) compose a well-defined village occupying a definite, permanent area with sovereignty, and finally, a tribe by a number of villages of the same descendants.

Dormitory or *morung* as it is sometimes called, for the young unmarried men and among some tribes for unmarried girls as well, is considered to be an important educational, political and social institution. All the unmarried boys and girls in the village, say from seven or eight years onwards till they marry and set up their own houses, sleep in the bachelors' or girls' dormitories. Among some tribes, boys' *morung*, where feminine entry is strictly prohibited, is held in high esteem. They learn manners, discipline, art, stories, songs, war tactics, diplomacy, religious and customary rites and ceremonies living in it. In other words, it has been a school for the young to learn the art of livelihood, responsibility and co-operation before the Nagas came in contact with the modern education and life.

The Nagas consider marriage as a vitally sacred institution of society and the race ordained for the procreation of child for the continuation of social unit. The question of marriage is generally an affair settled by whims of parents although girls and boys are given considerable freedom in choosing their lifelong partners. Marriage within the same clan is strictly forbidden under their unwritten customary code. Usually, the boy and girl, after having a period of courtship convey their decision to their parents who in turn negotiate the marriage and the price. The marriage price is given by the parents of the boy and the girl in the form of paddy, money, cows etc., and in some cases, paddy field in order to form a new family. All these vary considerably according to social status of the families concerned, though in most tribes this too is prescribed by custom. Servitude marriage is rare. Marriage according to traditional Naga custom is not compulsory, but prolonged celibacy or unmarried man is certainly considered to be a disgrace and that does not entitle one

to social marital status and consideration. If an unmarried man is dead, there is no genna for the whole village except the clan.

Let us see how the marriage in some Naga tribes like Chakhesang, Angami and Mao, etc. is fixed. The boy will tell about the girl of his choice to his parents or relatives who send a friend to ascertain the wishes of the girl and her parents. When the latter express their consent with some conditions, the bridegroom's father puts the negotiation on to the test by strangling a fowl and watching which way, when dying, it crosses its legs. If the legs are placed in an unauspicious manner, the negotiation is at once broken off, in case it crosses its legs in a favourable way, the matter is pursued further. But, at this stage, the girl is allowed to exercise her choice to have a good dream for the marriage. Again if the dream is unpropitious, the matter ends; but if all goes well, the wedding day is fixed. The wedding proceedings follow with a great feast. In the early morning or evening in some cases, the bride goes to her bridegroom's house in bridal clothes and ornaments and sleeps there. But the groom retires to the bachelor's dormitory. The next day he gives a small marriage feast with rites to his relatives, friends and the clan, but the young couple sleep separate on this night also. On the third day, they visit their fields together, and the village priest is called in after lapse of some days to perform special rites of union after which sexual consumption takes place and another great marriage feast follows.

For the Lotha and Sema Nagas, marriage is based on the price system. The father of the girl has to get money from the bridegroom depending on his social status. Another form that prevails is love marriage. Monogamy is existing practice, notwithstanding polygamy, not prohibited by custom, exists seldom. Polyandry is a strange thing to them. Marriage by forcible abduction of the bride too is unknown. Divorce is not uncommon. It takes place on the grounds of infidelity, mutual incompatibility of temperament, taste, ideals, interests and careless management of the household affairs. In the very extreme case of an unfaithful wife, after having deprived of her jewellery and personal property, her hair cut off, her nose clipped or split upon with a spear, she is returned to her parents or relatives. In mutual incompatibility, the consent of both the parties is obtained, the property of the family held in common is divided equally between husband and wife and the woman is once again free to marry whomsoever she pleases. The child or children as a rule are to remain with the male parent. Such children who require maternal care follow the mother and are tenderly cared for

by her until they are able to look after themselves when they come back to the father. If any kind of unfaithfulness on the part of an engaged girl is found valid, the man recovers all the settled marriage price. After marriage, the female chastity keeps rigidly very high although it is low before marriage because of the fact that girls are allowed great latitude not in the belief as we have found among certain tribes in Tibet, Malabar, and Philippines where virginity stands a barrier to marriage as the husband would violate the taboo that forbids him to shed the blood of any member of his tribe; in Tibet, mother uses to seek man to deflower her daughter, in Malabar, girls themselves beg the services of men to break their virginity to get married; in Philippines a special official, appointed at high salary, performs the task for prospective husbands. The Naga girls as we have described above, sleep together in group in their dormitories where the boys, mostly their lovers, come to have competition of songs, mostly love songs and mix together freely even at the point of sexual intercourse; however, girls are cautious for the reason that it would be difficult to get husbands if they indulge in immoral habits. Sometimes, illegitimate child is born but by custom is made legitimate by forcing lovers to marry before the birth of the child. Abortion and infanticide are rarely practised. In any way, incest is hardly known and the crime of adultery and seduction is treated with the utmost cruelty. An offender is brought before the village council assembled to investigate the offence and if it is proved, he is decapitated on a conspicuous part of the road, between two or three villages; or he is tied with cane cords to the tree and crucified. In some tribes it is the practice to deprive both the seducer and the seduced of their lives; in others, the former is placed in a basket, his hands and feet tied together, and rolled many times from the summit of a hill till he is dead. A widow, by custom, can remarry but has to abandon her claims to the property of her husband outside the purview of the near family of the husband. So usually she marries the brother or the nearest relative of the deceased in which case, she retains all her husband's property. A peculiar custom prevails among some Naga tribes that the son of the dead father can marry his stepmother.

The Naga women have almost the same rights and duties as men with a few exceptions. They are not primordially allowed to participate in politics, fighting, hunting and also in some religious functions even though they are partners of men in all their wishes, thoughts and functions. Chastity and devotion to their husbands and household affairs after marriage are considered as efficacious as to be their most prized virtues falling short of which they are divorced and also

fined by the village authority. During the head-hunting wars, women were kidnapped to make the wives of the victorious enemies. If a man knowingly or otherwise seduces a woman and if she becomes pregnant, it is his responsibility under the customary law to make her his legitimate wife by marrying her even a few days before the child-birth. Almost all the household works such as begetting and rearing children, pounding paddy in large wooden mortars and winnowing it by tossing on a flat basket, hauling water from the springs almost below the village, cutting and bringing in firewood, preparing food for the members of the family, spinning, weaving the clothes from cotton and nettle fibres, manufacturing salt, tending of cows, pigs, fowls, and all the other household chores are performed mostly by women. Besides these, they work with men to produce rice, millet, maize, cotton, tobacco as well as several kinds of vegetables and to clear the paddy fields nurtured by weeds and shrubs.

The Nagas have a peculiar kind of slavery which is different from its conventional sense and value. Slaves mostly from the poor family or the purchased are well treated on the whole and are considered almost as members of the family. They eat the same food, do the same work like other members of the family. If they behave well, they are entitled to inherit property rights also. But an Ao custom different from the other Naga tribes prevails that the disobedient slaves can be sold out for human sacrifice to propitiate spirits of the men who have been killed; a female slave is not allowed to marry or have children with master; if she becomes pregnant, the child is killed after birth or else abortion is performed; but slaves can marry among themselves and have children who are to become slaves. Female slave is not allowed to be tattooed like other women. There are some people believed to be sustained with evil spirits that curse whosoever meet on spirit-moving day once a month and cause stomach-ache.¹ The other Nagas are reluctant to marry them lest their descendants get affected although their rights and status are the same as others in the society. However, in all, the Nagas admit that men are not all equal in congenial endowment, as such, the ruling of rational superior to less rational inferior is a natural law.

¹ The belief originates from a story that a fat buffalo that came out from a small lake in Numai or Oman was killed, large centipede found in its flesh and abandoned by the villagers as unnatural while an obstinate family ate it up. Thereafter, this family got evil-spirited and while the villagers refused to get their two daughters married, one run to a north-west village and the other to a southern village. Now they married somehow and their descendants spread to all other tribes. As Christianity disclaims such belief, these people have converted themselves into it to make the belief died in spite of the fact that any persons who point them to be evil-spirited are fined.

The Nagas wear passionately bright patterns of clothes, mostly coloured in dark blue and in some cases so dark as to be almost black with red and yellow stripes, white and brown. Many of these clothes are remarkably ornamented with goat's hair dyed red and cowries. They are woven by the women only on the small loin looms like the Tibetan ones in their homes. The prominent Naga warriors and donors of feasts of merit wear special dresses which are very impressive to look at and which have been made taboo for the commoners.

GOVERNMENT

The permanent political institution of the Naga society has been the sovereign village-state which has different forms of government. The Semas, Konyaks and Maos have hereditary monarchy, among them the Konyak kings (Angs) have greater powers whose words are followed by the people as laws. The Aos have a republican form of government in which a sizeable council of elected headmen called "Tatars" rules with limited authority. The Angamis, Lothas, Rengmas, etc. practice a peculiar type of democracy with little variation in the nature of its composition. They are nominally governed by the two kings or chieftains of their respective villages, chosen for their bravery in war, skilful diplomacy, richness in the form of cattle and land or power of oratory in contrast to the hereditary system in which the office of king passes to the eldest son on the death of his father, or to the youngest one or if the king dies issueless, to the nearest descendant. Thus in almost all the Naga village-states in principle except Aos, there are modest hereditary kings or elected chieftains assisted by a council of elders elected by the clans from amongst the most respected, experienced and enlightened persons or an oligarchy of old and influential men known as *gaonbwas* or village headmen since the British era.

Being the head of the village, king or chieftain is the repository of God's favour and people's obedience and has a special status and certain privileges, though confined to the reserved paddy field, a house constructed by the villagers, testing the first brew of ricebeer made for the purpose of entertainment of the villagers in a socially prestigious feast and sharing of a tiny portion of every animal killed on such a occasion and in hunting. The highest chief of Pusaimai or Pudunamai of the Mao tribe receives tribute in the form of one basket of rice a year from each family. In case of the Semas, he is entitled to have three or four wives at a time, which is forbidden to his subjects. But he has no arbitrary power of the sovereign either

secular or religious, without the consent of the council and is bound to the web of ancient tribal customs and laws. Here too, he has a modest executive power in the execution of customary law, genna, etc., which may be withdrawn by the village council. Otherwise, at times no one pays any attention to him. He does not collect any revenue from his people for the community; neither can he issue any orders with any chance of being obeyed if the measure or act he adopts is inconsistent with the will of his subjects. He is more powerful and firm to what customary law says and is keen on execution, failing which he agitates before the council for his resignation as a protest against inaction in implementing it to the case or issue in question. As a custom, people obey his orders so far as they are in accordance with customs and the wishes of the community at large though he has no power to take cognizance of offences against the person or the property of individuals. Nevertheless, whatever the pretext, he acts as the sagacious agent of the people. He can also be very easily deposed by the whole village by a decision arrived at by the village council only when he seriously violates the forbidden things and customs even after having been warned. In such case, the deposed willingly steps down without any complaint. The popular belief is that if he or his wife does not observe the customs, traditions and religious prohibitions even in regard to food, both meat and vegetables and sex, the people of the village will not only be in calamity and tribulations but would also suffer in disease, famine and death. For instance, it is believed that if he eats fowl his villagers will suffer from blindness, if pork, some would be insane, if dog, the hunting villagers would meet bad luck and if buffalo, the villages could be deprived of their intelligence and mental soundness. Above all, he must not use abusive language but sweet and pleasant words to everyone, whatever provocation may be; nor must he have any imprecation on anyone. Therefore, he is supposed to lead a virtuous life by observing customs etc., as to what he is assigned as the chief priest.

The king or chieftain deals with a foreigner directly. Whenever any stranger comes to the Naga village, he is first of all conducted to visit the king at his residence. He inquires the object of his visit and if it is for a purpose of great importance like a message sent by the stranger's village to have good relations or of obtaining redress of wrongs committed by the villagers, he is detained and shown great hospitality till the village council assembles, discusses the matter and gives its final decision. Then the stranger is allowed to go on his way through which he comes.

Again every village council whose authority rules loosely over the village-state plays another important role. The members of the village council come together and take all the important measures or decisions for a course of action in the public affairs of the village by a show of hands in the open ground or in a hall of justice which is found in case of some tribes. Their decisions on certain matters become the laws binding on the villagers since these are looked upon as the will of the people. The council not only deals with relations with other foreign village-states but also has the power to declare war and to conclude peace. It decides even civil and criminal disputes. In case, any matter becomes complicated, the representatives of each village or sometimes, but rarely, of different tribes, are called in to settle the issue at dispute according to the customary or legal norms which are mainly based on the protection of the natural and unalienable rights of man, i.e., life, liberty, freedom, and pursuit of happiness. However, the council which sits as a voluntary conciliatory body to arrive at an amicable settlement of the problem, has in no way, any right to pass a judgment taking one's life in the form of capital punishment, even if one has committed murder or other serious crime. But it can only prescribe severe punishment to the person thus convicted.

To explain a little more elaborately, underneath this political phenomenon, the bedrock of the Naga society is still the unwritten law. This law is not a command issued by a determinate ruler or body of persons to the members of a political society for obedience, failing which a penalty is enforced, but based on customs which every Naga scrupulously observes and as such any of its infringement rarely or never takes place ; the offenders are, almost without exception, ostracised. Thus age-honoured customs afford a great measure of order, peace and stability to the Nagas. To this basis of customs a supernatural sanction is added by religious force which is in essence or substance the ways of one's life identical to the will and law of God to be followed by men to keep a harmony of life in the world. It is these customs that make them sane, and become sometimes stronger than law, for customs originate out of the conscience of the people ordained by God and are considered natural selection of those modes of action with justice. To violate the customs is to breach the religion which consequently means incurring wrath of the Almighty and His ultimate punishment. The same customs bind the family, the clan, the village and the tribe or tribes. But the customs fall often at quite a very low ebb, when the question of taking vengeance in happenings like murder, adultery,

theft, etc., comes about. Here customs and religious precepts are set aside and the Mosaic saying, 'an eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth' or the law of Talionis (Cicero's phrase) becomes the rule. Thus, among the Naga tribes, it lurks that the murder of A by B will lead to the murder of B or any member of his clan by A's clan. If murder cannot be committed at the flight of B's men from the village to another village to avoid being killed by A's, or for protection, their houses will be ravaged and property destroyed beyond description till interference comes from a stronger clan or village who will use their power and influence to have the revengeful family or clan content with a heavy imposition of fine in form of property or cash, and make peace instead of murder. Thus, further bloodshed by revenge is averted when fine settled by the village or tribal council is paid off. How much fine or penalty must be paid for an eye, a tooth, an arm or a life is assessed on the basis of the sex, age or status the murdered held during his life-time. Quite often murder may lead to what we call 'blood-feud' between the two clans or villages and may be handed down from one generation to another, involving in its relentless course—brutal murder of helpless old men and women, innocent young girls, boys and children. In some cases, blood-feud may arise from a dispute over land or water being taken by the other persons or kinsmen for terrace cultivation. However, sometimes, the blood-feud breaks into bitter war which devastates the whole village. At other times, crime and offences occur infrequently by accident rather than intentionally so that they can scarcely be formed into a penal code. Yet, some customs as thought to be cumbersome or obsolete are modified by the village council under the sanction of the king or chieftain to suit the needs of the community under fast changing circumstances. The spread of Christianity has also helped in shedding some of the superstitions and outmoded customs and traditions.

Nonetheless, the Nagas have been happy in harmony and smoothness of life unparalleled anywhere but with Nature, without an elaborate standing policemen, soldiers, judges and prisons under a village government with little authority. This form of government we may describe, is a sort of Naga anarchism in absence of a measure of permanent existence of a government with force. It is perfectly a government which least governs at all and in which everyone follows his own conscience which indicates not to infract the right of his fellows but to respect them for the return of the same kind of respect as to have a peaceful community where all human beings work to be equal in respect of the rights, opportunities, notwithstanding

the inequality of the mentality and ability, to a good, just and free life. This seems inextricably to be a society what a modern anarchist perennially lauds to establish on earth for healthy human society.

ECONOMY

Agriculture and animal husbandry have been the basic occupations of the Nagas since the time immemorial. Such economic pursuits have caused them to live in thousands of villages scattered at the hill tops, but near the rivers or streams flowing out of springs. During the times of the head-hunting wars among the Nagas themselves or wars with the Assamese or Meiteis, women ploughed the fields, tended the crops and harvested while the young and able-bodied men guarded them, fought against the enemies and defended the village and paddy fields from destruction by enemies. The people lived in concentrated groups, and produced the agricultural products co-operatively. Barter system was, as it is today very rarely found in some backward areas, the medium instrument and value of exchange of goods. The Nagas including the educated ones do the agricultural manual labour as a noble profession right from childhood without any slight odium.

The Nagas are enterprising cultivators whose staple grain is rice and use two familiar methods of cultivation. One involves wet and dry rice cultivation known as terrace method and other jhum, sometimes known as slash and burn cultivation in available fertile land. The former method is being used by somewhat advanced tribes like Angami, Mao, Sema and Tangkhul Nagas in a very scientific manner, as found in Malaya, Indonesia, Philippines, Formosa, Japan, etc. to produce the rice of various kinds. The beautiful series of the terraced fields in the lower hill slopes and valleys excavated by great organized co-operate labour and skill are watered in common or individually by means of the well-constructed channels carried along the contours of the steep hills for long distances and at excessively easy gradients. They have been continuously cultivated for thousands of years.

It is interesting to know how a terrace field is made ready for cultivation. An intimation is given by the person for whose benefit the land is to be cleared for terrace to the heads of different families in the village; then, at least one member is deputed for the job from every house or the near relatives; all of them proceed to work for the field. After the work is completed, they are entertained by the person concerned with an abundance of ricebeer, boiled rice, fowl, pork, etc. This terrace system was extended north-

wards from Manipur on account of better outputs of rice than job's tears (*coix lacryama*), millet and others adoptable to their environment.

Jhum cultivation varies to a great extent. But mostly, according to it, a patch of virgin or near fertile forest or land on the hillside in most of the cases, is to be chosen, cleared of all trees and grasses, burnt over the undergrown and hoed over the ashes on the ground where rice, maize, millet, job's tears, chillies, potatoes, ginger, capsicums, pumpkins, cotton and other kinds of vegetables are dibbed in. The same plot is used for about two years or so in succession until it is worn out and overrun with weeds and grasses. It is then allowed to lie fallow for some years till the soil regains its fertility. At the same time, another spot is selected for such cultivation and the same process is repeated.

The Nagas use cowdung, sand deposited by rivers during rainy season and some special plants and trees for making manure for their agricultural land. Cotton is also grown abundantly, more especially on the northern Naga area inhabited by the Lotha and Ao Nagas for their own consumption as well as for sale. Important forest products are bee wax, India rubber, tea, seed and several fibres, besides red, yellow, blue and black dyes. The primary agricultural implements used by the Nagas have been light *boe dao*, rake, stone, wood supplemented by metals and iron now. But generally, they use rake for levelling the ground which necessitates to be drawn by a buffalo instead of cow, with the help of two persons. When the rice crop is growing, they take every protection from the ants and termites, the boars and bears, the rats and ricebirds that would imperil it. They reap the grain with sickles set with flint teeth. Orchard gardening has become popular in Nagaland as in other lower Himalayan regions of Nepal and Sikkim and also including the Khasi hills. Hunting of animals and birds with spears, guns and bows and arrows among some tribes is the favourite pastime of the Nagas. Dogs are used to trace out the wild animals from their hide-outs. They catch animals and birds by means of nets and other devices also. They fish by using traps, baskets and bamboo rods in the submerged fields, lakes and rivers. Besides, poisonous plants are used to fish in river whereby the poisoned fishes float on the surface of the water and are collected without trouble. Cattle, buffalo, pig, dog, mithun, yak, cat, fowl, etc. are domesticated for food and trade. Almost every Naga village has its blacksmith, mostly engaged in making iron implements for the use by village community. They manufacture indigenous salt also. Thus, generally speaking, the

Nagas are fairly self-sustaining and provide themselves well for their needs.

In the matters of land and other property, in most of the tribes there is the private ownership to the means of production and distribution, though most of the uncultivated or waste land belongs to clan or village or villages in common. In the beginning it was held that land is the gift of God to men to support and comfort their lives. It was thought to be a common property meant to be commonly held. But when the people grew in number, they extended themselves by forming new villages, claiming more and more land for themselves for agriculture and pastures. Then such lands and forests appropriated by the new villages came under their ownership by establishing boundaries mostly laid of stones, woods, hills and rivers. Still within the village the clans or in some cases, the whole village possess common land.

But since the primitive capitalism had been the basis of economic unit, whosoever has put his labour on the land in cultivation or forest has become the owner. Such appropriation of the ownership by cultivation extends a right to what has been cultivated or safeguarded and the remaining lands are left open for other members of the clan or village for use and occupation. In fact, Naga economy has begun with a measure of family communism and separated with a measure of rude capitalism. In some cases, like the Changs or Semas, land belongs to the chief of the village or tribe, a way similar with the Kuki Lushai tribes.

The process of land ownership has ushered into the land owning rich class and the landless poor class. The latter in most cases have lived upon the mercy of the former by helping in cultivation or serving as servants, receiving some doles of paddy and cultivation facilities. But still pastures are commonly held. Any appropriated land, as a custom, cannot be sold or alienated to an outsider without the consent of the near ones of the clan and only when no one of the clan can purchase at a low price, it goes to any other. However, the land is generally bequeathed only to the family heirs in the direct male line. On the death of the father, all property is divided equally among all the sons and daughters and immovable property which goes only to sons and the youngest one always receiving the house in addition to his share. Neither the widow nor daughters have any claim or right to it except to movable property, paddy, clothes, ornaments, though they have certainly to live on the property of husband or father till death or marriage. In case of default of sons, the immovable property of the deceased goes to the

brothers or as an exogamic law dictates, to the other men of the same clan. But among a few tribes, the inheritance of property succeeds to the women also. All the household Nagas are yeomen owning their own soil and it is a disgrace to have none. What is noteworthy about the economic life of the Nagas is the economic uniformity that they have no big landlords, no extreme paupers, no millionaires, no slums and no beggars. In other words, everyone has everything fairly enough to meet the needs of life, neither richness nor poverty, although a small bourgeois class has emerged under modern capitalism since the Second World War.

RELIGION AND CULTURE

The religion of the Nagas is not Hinduism, Buddhism, Confucianism, Christianity and Islam but what we vaguely call animism which dominates substantially the temper and texture of social, economic, political and cultural life of the Nagas. It is not possible here to go into a detailed exposition of animism. Suffice to point out that what animism precisely implies by the Nagas is that there is an invisible benevolent Creator of the earth and the Disposer of all events, conventionally known as God who created all the things including man even down to the ants, trees, stones, etc. in the universe, put divine souls in them, connected them with the Natural Laws and appointed a number of white good gods what we may more properly call angels and evil black gods (the devils) including gnome to rule over mankind, the *homo sapiens*, according to his laws in a hierarchical structure just like a government in temporal sense, apart from the gods of the earth, sun, sky, light, fire, wind, water, streams, mountains and inanimate objects. These gods maintain everyday records of the words and deeds of man for reward of good and punishment of evil done and for resolving the chain of births and deaths on earth, and forgive the innocent sins of those who pray upon Him. There are also some other good and evil spirits and other godheads dwelling in rocks, forests, groves, streams and rivers. The malignant demons are very fond of doing any harm or killing men intentionally. In order to propitiate and exorcise them, the Nagas usually offer efficacious things like egg, fowl, in some cases its giblets, spirituous liquor, pig, cattle, mithum, cloth, pieces of iron, etc. in case of sickness, mania, ill-luck and a variety of other calamities for which they are sometimes called devil worshippers. There are also other rituals, ceremonies, prayers, incantations, taboos, gennas that are performed by the Nagas to have a

religious, moral and philosophical life, to prolong life, to ward off evil to obtain children and to destroy or harass sworn enemies. Even to the devils, they are not supposed to use lewd words with disdain. Sometimes they keep blood on the doorposts like the Israelites and suspend large bunches of leaves to the doorposts in the belief that evil gods on seeing them will leave the inmates untouched. Apart from these, individuals pray to God to avert bad luck, cure sickness, promise victory in life and assure a propitious passage from this world into the next. But one has to follow the following human laws if he or she would not go astray and be destroyed, before he or she transforms into another form after a definite period of immortal life:

- (i) Respect and fear of God;
- (ii) Don't swear in the name of God for falsehood;
- (iii) Don't be afraid of anything except God;
- (iv) Don't do harm, beat and murder other fellow-beings unjustly;
- (v) Don't commit adultery;
- (vi) Don't steal things of others;
- (vii) Don't tell a lie;
- (viii) Don't covet others' land;
- (ix) Honour thy father and mother;
- (x) Venerate the earth which gives you life.

These are very much identical with the Mosaic code to the Israelites, albeit the historical difference that the former has been given to man right from the beginning, while the latter was given to Moses by God, as Bible says. Yet, men are to act upon them in order to lead a virtuous and moral life and to do good to the unfortunate beings so that they will receive God's blessing during lifetime and even after death. Human soul, according to one's deeds on earth passes through seven lives in birth after death and is later on, transformed into insect or bee or an eternal death. In some cases, the soul of a good person who abstains from eating flesh and serves the people observing God's laws, would go away into the realms of space above and become an immortal star. Even in some other cases, good men's souls are placed in heaven of plenty whereas the souls of the bad in the hell, a place of dreadfulness, poverty and scarcity but not a place of "fire, steel, serpents, venomous insects, savage beasts, birds of prey, gall, poison, stench" where evil souls are to be boiled in the cauldron as the western world believes. But at times, as any other people, the Nagas throw away all reverence for commandment of God and decent human law of life when quarrels occur and

arms taken up to make full requittal.

The Nagas have no established temples and images like the Hindus or Buddhists, or mosques like the Muslims or churches like the Christians, for the simple reason that God sees everything and every happening on earth. They also believe that religion is for inspiring goodness in man and repression and elimination of evil, aggressiveness, killing, annihilation as part of instinctual endowment in men by following God's laws in spirit and in words in order to receive His blessing, protection and love. Only a few devout words are uttered to God, such as "God (you) save me or protect me from evils for I worship you". With these words, the Nagas express their whole feelings of awe, sorrow, reverence and affection towards Him.

Quite peculiarly, they do not believe in the concept of original sin of man like the Christians do. Sin which consists primarily of the breaches of the unwritten laws of God and of customary laws of a society, either by intent or by accident, if it all goes and comes according to words and deeds of man. To break them by intent must be visited by punishment while by accident can be forgiven. Again, sin which causes sickness and death to a man, may be that of some members of the community other than any unfortunate individual on whom the punishment has fallen, yet rites of expiation necessary in view of the causation of the sickness are performed. They believe as well that their dead forefathers always think good for their descendants. During the festivals and on other auspicious days, some modest offering—usually a few grains of food and of ricebeer, is made to the departed souls with deep remembrance and reverence in their belief that they (the dead) use to come from the realm of death and visit their quick people. If they are pleased, they would bring good fortune and if not, it will just be the reverse. In any kind of calamity, prayers are sent to them for their protection.

In spite of the good divine laws above-mentioned, the Naga life, in practice, is not committed to non-violence as an absolute way of life. Fighting or war against outsiders is supposed by Nagas like the Greeks to be a matrix of civilization and survival of mankind. It is a natural quality and necessity of human existence and advancement and to hold the society together, even non-violence and peace, to be a matter of ethos, a way of life at home. So the Nagas from time immemorial have practised head-hunting war which has been entrenched in themselves as a professional ease if not the object of worship and depository of sanctity more or less like that prevailed in Europe, British Islands, Ireland, Nigerian Africa, Balkan Peninsula, Malaysia, Indonesia, Indo-China, Philippines, North America, Burma and

Assam with different curious beliefs. The reasons, however, mingled with superstition and social position are that it ensures good harvest if the blood of the enemy head could be sprinkled over their fields; second, the man who chops off a head from the enemy group is entitled either for marriage or a seat in the village council and thus is affirmed an honourable position in the society and finally, the removing and preserving the head of the man killed in the war is a proof of success over the enemies. On the contrary, the Kuki-Mizo-Chin people indulge in head-hunting in the belief that all the enemies they kill in the war would attend them as slaves after death.

It is also quite fascinating to study how the Nagas conduct head-hunting war. First of all, all the able-bodied and strong warriors assemble together and decide on the enemy villages to be attacked and also whether the attack will be by surprise or by an open challenge. Appointed to command the party, the chief consults, before starting the sojourn for war, the usual omens in accordance with established custom and if proving propitious, a fowl is killed and cooked and all partake of it. Then they provide themselves with their usual war weapons—spear or javelin, dao, shield, occasionally a crossbow and arrows of pointed bamboo, sometimes poisoned with vegetable extract or venomous snakes and fire-arm. At times, they put on war dress which consists of a number of odd contrivances to give a fierce appearance. They carry food for about two days, which is wrapped in the plaintain leaves, bamboo choong, a hollow joint of the bamboo filled with water in the back baskets and set for the village to be sallied out. If no straggling men can be intercepted when they lie in ambush on vantage-ground, from dusk till dawn, they advance unpusillanimously towards the village, set the houses on fire if it remains undefended, kill men, women and children with utmost ferocity, who fly in horror, shrieking and weeping from flames, decapitate their heads, roll them up in clothes and carry them home as trophies of their victory in war. In some cases they keep the skulls in their houses for five days, during which the warriors do not eat food cooked by women. They cook themselves in different cooking utensils and shall not have any sexual intercourse with their wives. The heads are kept or buried followed by a great feast of pork and beef with ricebeer. Afterwards they bathe themselves and return to their normal avocations. Another method of warfare is the open war. Many openly challenge their enemies to combat, or sometimes spend a whole campaign in dodging or engage in regular battles like those of other nations, tear off the heads of the killed and continue the conflict with desperate cruelty till the truce and its terms have been

agreed upon between the warring villages. Generally they do not take any prisoners of war except killing on the spot. However, the Kacha Nagas take prisoners and keep them as slaves to be afterwards redeemed by their relatives¹ on payment of ransom or mithun. But curiously in most cases, the heads of the killed have to be returned to the people to whom the victims belong after proceedings of taboos have been finished. The warriors who have taken many of his enemies' heads are entitled to wear a collar round their neck reaching down to the waist, made of goats' hair, dyed in red and interlaced with long flowing of hair of the persons they have killed, as an insignia of honour.

Thus we find whatever reasons under the bondage of ignorance, idiocy and superstition may be sound, it is predominantly this baneful head-hunting war that has divided Nagas into a number of small disunited sovereign independent village-states whose people inviolately recognise that they are the same descendants, embedded in basic common culture. Yet, these fratricidal head-hunting wars have become so invariably devastating that they brought their civilisation to grief and disaster. Realising the aftermath, animism or shamanism has shifted from sanctification of head-hunting to outright taboos of head-hunting.

Having a passionate love of justice and truth at the bottom of their minds and hearts, the Nagas generally confirm the literal truth of their words and facts in any question under dispute by swearing an oath in the name of God which will invoke His wrath on the oath-taking person, if he tells a lie or deflects from truth although with the spread of modern civilization, the belief has undergone a change. Most of the educated Nagas do not fear the perjurious or dreadful consequences of oath-swearing. The formularies of oath-taking vary among the Naga tribes though there are almost set methods. Swearing in a wrong manner will exempt the person involved from all liabilities. For example, according to some tribes, each party for an oath takes a fowl, one the head and other the legs and is pulled asunder, intimating that in case of the breach of agreement, the oath-taker would merit the same treatment or two parties take hold of the end of a spear and cut it into two pieces, leaving a bit in the hands of each party or take spear between teeth, signifying that failing to act upon the agreement entered, they are prepared to be victims of them. After the administration of the oath, it is customary not to take food for the day, and in some cases, even to wash the hands and face.

See Soppit, C.A. A short Account of the Kacha Naga Tribe in the North Cachar Hills, Shillong, 1885, pp. 1-20.

Often, they swear also by the sun and moon to affirm the truth-telling. Sometimes, the Mao and Maram Nagas slaughter a cat to make an oath by ordeal firm to misfortune and sudden death in the case of perjury. They have this strange and beautiful custom of craving for truth and justice between man and man in their social acts, although individually they may be unscrupulous and vain in life as many other human beings are.

As described above, the Nagas believe in the immortality of a virtuous human soul at least up to seven times. And a new born child is sometimes traced to ascertain as to which of its ancestors has been reborn. Rites are associated with the occasion of birth, name-giving ear-piercing and first hair-cutting of the child. But the souls of those persons killed by wild animals (including being gored to death by bull or buffalo), drowned, burnt, died of snake bite and women dead in child-birth are deemed to have been permanently lost.

Since the Nagas think that death of a man on this earth ushers into another world, they lugubriously depart the deceased one in great honour and solemnity. The funeral rites and feast are held according to the social status of the deceased and the manner of his death. The Aos and Konyaks wrap the dead body in a mat and expose it in a bamboo platform or bier under small roof in the village cemetery like the Paiwan of Formosa; but strangely enough, they bury their hunting dogs while the Khienmungams desiccate the dead body. But most of the Nagas bury their dead in the direction whence they deem their ancestors came and are still there. Before funeral is performed, the corpse is washed, wrapped in new clothes and flowers and kept open to the public who come in line to mourn. Here we are to keep in mind that the moment a person dies, information is sent out not only to the villagers but to all close friends and relatives living afar in other village-states also, who come with cloth, ricebeer and salt to offer to the deceased. The funeral feast is prepared at once according to status and wealth of the deceased, from one cow to ten cows or more and buffalo in rare cases, including pig and dog. They are killed early in the morning. The heads, livers and certain portions of the meat are set apart and the remaining distributed among the family members, relatives, friends and other mourners. Then the funeral obsequies are carried on. The regular coffin, a rough wooden box, being made ready, the deceased's father-in-law, if he has one or if not, a friend from another clan places a plain spear down on the right side of the body whereas in case of a woman it is the black cloth. A wisp of thatching grass is burnt inside the house and the body is now placed in the

coffin; a dao is given on his right hand, and two spears and a split stick with bamboo ribbon for kindling fire. The coffin is brought for burial in the grave, close to deceased's house. Before the coffin is lowered into the grave which is about 6 feet deep, the members of the family, relatives, friends and villagers shriek or howl at the top of their voices scolding, tears streaming from their eyes. In some cases, the male friends of dead, each with a shield and a couple of spears dance about challenging the devil who has taken the soul of the dead man; the women cry with arms outstretched, slapping the ground with their clothes, usually uttering such words: "Don't be afraid; do not worry, go to the kingdom happily till we meet again there since evil god has ravished you from us. We will remember you for ever." Now the coffin is lowered into the grave, some edibles are also thrown in, after that large stones are placed over it and the earth is rapidly filled in. On the following day, the shield, spear, ornaments, etc. worn by the deceased during his life-time are placed over the grave and in case of woman her basket, weaving sticks. A dead child is usually buried inside the house. The religious rites and ceremonies are later on performed, so that the dead man would go to the deathland, averting some impending evil or the relatives of the dead may not be affected by the sins which the dead man might have committed in life time.

There is among the Nagas another intense belief like superstition to see good or bad omens at the time of an important undertaking, say starting a war, commencing a journey, the first sowing out or harvesting or in case of illness to ascertain the particular demon who is offended from an oracle or sometimes loosely called 'medicine-man' supposed to be good god's messenger due to virtuous life better endowed with the power of divination. The oracle is forbidden by god not to eat animal flesh and even fish and drink not much rice-beer. He has to live on wages earned from the treatment of the patients by the jungle herbs and medicines prescribed by the god. It is also said that if oracle takes more or less money or things from patients, he is liable to be rebuked, punished or killed. Thus his life is ordained not for self, not for fulfilment of any earthy desire for wealth or fame, but solely for the service or good of suffering humanity. When any calamity happens oracle is called in to find out the particular god who has been offended and who is to be pacified by sacrifices or ceremonies like eggs, grains of rice or the entrails of a fowl, even cow in order to avert impending dangers. After some rituals are performed in such cases, the flesh is distributed among villagers. The sacrificer, the presiding sooth-sayer and

relatives usually take the lion's share. Among these divined persons, some are expert in anatomy, physiology and medicine, and cure the patients by touching the body or by seeing from the grains of rice. For abortion, a kind of jungle herb is used and birth control is suggested by reading menstrual cycle.

Another strange custom is what we call "Genna" or to put it a little differently, "taboo" which plays so much significant part in the social and religious life of the Nagas. Genna literally means "forbidding", people to normal mode of work or eating or touching any thing of the forbidden things on the particular day or days. Inclusive interestingly of a series of ritual acts, it affects the individual, a single household, exclusive men or women groups, clan, village and different tribes. The affected persons under genna are supposed to remain at home without participation in any work and in some cases restricted to eating and sexual congress also as long as it lasts. Nothing is allowed to be taken into or brought out of the house during its continuance. Even outsiders are kept in quarantine or if admitted, will not be entertained. At times, according to the nature of genna, it requires the exclusion of persons of different clans too in order to assert the social unity and integrity of the clan. In other words, the clan or tribe or a number of tribes observe genna which is periodically recurred by some unknown emergency like earthquake or the fall of a branch of pear tree at Arahou or Sajouba in Mao area as mentioned elsewhere. Genna in a negative sense prohibits the use of some things which it believes, possess socially dangerous attributions and produce evil effects. So the strict adherence of genna is necessary in order to avoid such evils upon human life. Most of the commonplace gennas observed, are on the birth of a child in the house, a cow calving or any other domestic animals bringing forth new offsprings, the death of socially important persons who have fed the people to feast of ricebeer and meat, of king and queen or chieftain and chieftainess, and the unnatural death of a man killed by tiger or wasted away by flood or drowned in a pool, the coronation of ascendancy to the throne, preparation of expedition like head-hunting or animal hunting in the forests, the sowing of seeds and harvesting of crops the rise of new moon, the welcome of new year day, etc. The gennas described here are almost common to all the Nagas and even the Kuki Mizo-Chins. But we find an extreme form of genna among the Aos and Lothas. When any member of the family dies by the bite of a tiger, by falling from a tree, by crushing under a falling tree and by drowning, the surviving members of the family desert the house, even the whole property

right down to the clothes they use and leave the village naked in the jungle for a month considered as condemned period. The victimized are customarily supplied by old men among the relatives with enough clothes to cover their nakedness. At the expiry of the period, they return to their village as the punishment of god for the sin which fell upon him or her, is supposed to be completed. Neither they nor any other people in their village should touch or use any of the abandoned property taken to be taboo nor a new house can be built on the same wretched site in the belief that the evil god would come upon them again for breach of command. Again in a genna day in a year or two or so omens are consulted and forthcoming events taken from the chosen two pieces of bamboo keeping on the waists of the two chaste bachelors, on behalf of the community at a tabooed place.

Oddly enough, there are other superstitions prevalent among the Nagas : one is the existence of tiger-men in the north-east, i.e., men with the power of turning themselves into tigers by means of magic or herbs or some other method. "Tiger-men are well known, and I have the pleasure of the acquaintance of one. This gentleman is a Sema chief of small village in the Tizu village. He himself disclaimed the power, but that he has it is implicitly believed by the whole of the Sema and Angami tribes."¹ Anyway, this is undoubtedly a form of lycanthropy which believes that in a supernatural condition man actually assumes the physical form of an animal such as wolf or bear in Europe and northern Asia, the hyena leopard in Africa and the tiger in India, China, Japan and elsewhere in Asia. It has been a wide delusion among people believing in reincarnation and the transmigration of souls. Another belief and practice is the conversation of the dead forefathers or relatives through a shaman or soothsayer during the death of person in devil dancing or in some other cases, while the diviner is around with the spirits under paroxysm of excitement. On this occasion the living relatives call on the dead ones through this shaman of all the happenings of his life-time.

The Nagas strongly believe that there are human-likes superior to men in intellectual, scientific and technological civilisation in some particular planets. Very recently, in the end of the 19th century, a huge tall hairy man-like fell in Khumai village in Mao area and stayed there for a few hours during which he did not move or respond to any call from the villagers but disappeared in a thready cloud in the sky. Even the eclipses and comets are held to presage good or disaster according to the way they appear to be seen.

¹ Davis, A.W. *Census of India: Assam*, 1891, V.I. p. 249.

The birth of twins also is regarded as auspicious. There exists a belief among the Nagas that the acts of parents affect the unborn child as such, that the parents are required to abstain from all acts held to be harmful in the temperament and character of the child. Quite evidently, as a rule, the married women also are restrained from taking certain articles of food during gestation, lest the bad qualities of food that they eat are transmitted to the children. Even before the marriage takes place, girls are not allowed to eat the flesh of certain animals.

The religious beliefs and practices described here generally are the main features commonly held not only by the Nagas but also by other South-East Asian peoples. E.A. Gait writes : "The first thing that strikes an inquirer into the religious beliefs of the hill tribes of this frontier is the extraordinary uniformity of the principle which underlines them all, and which they have in common not only with each other and with the north Turanian tribes, but also with the Dravidians of southern India. There can be no greater mistake than to assume that each tribe has its own individual beliefs, differing widely from those of others and circumscribed by the narrow tribal limits. The facts are quite the reverse and the religion of these tribes—shamanism, animism, nat worship, or whatever name may be applied to it—is everywhere practically the same. There are differences of practice or detail rather than of fundamental principles, and are far less important than those which divide the Saktas from the Vaishnavas, the Unitarians from the members of the Salvation Army."¹

The culture of the Nagas which displays itself in different ways of their life that has been pointed out here and there is insufficient to explain it fully. So we will see a little more precisely on the other facets of their culture. For the Nagas, there are 360 days or 12 months, each of 30 days, of a year divided into spring, summer autumn and winter seasons. They calculate with remarkable accuracy the movement of the moon, the eclipse of the moon, the sun, position and motion of the major stars and gravity of the earth.

There are quite a number of festivals celebrated during the year among which cultivation, harvest and prestigious feast are important. The cultivation festival marks the end of sowing and growing of all seeds and paddy of a year and propitiation of crops' god for good harvest whereas the harvest festival celebrated at the end of the year and the commencement of the new year. In the festival, religious rites are also performed to depart or wash off the evil things

¹ *Census of India: 1891. Assam, V. I, p. 92.*

a man does in the year: the graves of ancestors or monoliths are sprinkled with ricebeer to seek their blessings; in some cases, when a man dies, a farewell to the departed soul is given in the same year. These two festivals which last for 5 or 10 days, different from tribe to tribe are great occasions for an unlimited consumption of ricebeer, pork, dog beef, etc. During the festival days, the Nagas dress themselves in their best clothes and keep up dancing and singing

But the more important festival is what the anthropologists and sociologists loosely term as "the merit feast" for the want of an exactly true English equivalent for it, given by the rich and is accompanied by wild merry-making. There are about four or five kinds of feast but what is shown here is the second or third one as the first one is very simple, being held only for a genna on the day of his or her death. For such a festal occasion, a man spends about Rs. 3,000 at the minimum for guests and villagers, although half of this expenditure is recovered by the presents made by relatives and friends or in the form of paddy and money. All the collateral relatives of the couple living in different village-states far and near, are also invited to drink enormous quantities of ricebeer and to consume beef and pork to their fill. More than four, say ten to fifteen cows and in some cases buffalos and about 4 to 20 pigs are slaughtered; at least two in cruel and unusual ways. In this merit feast, they display picturesque dresses consisting of gimcrack bands of tawdry cowrie shells, feather, goat's hair dyed red, necklaces of beads, shells, brass ear-rings, ivory armlets, and petrified woods, dyed cane leggings in order to embellish themselves. The spears ornamented with dyed hair shields and daos (bill hooks), are also used. The old wise men recite their old stories or history and young men and women sing their songs in gay abandon.

A huge stone chosen after the acknowledgement of a good dream of feast giver, abstaining that night from all food and sexual intercourse, which is carefully lashed with canes and creepers, dragged by ropes, by men sometimes numbering several hundred, usually from long distance on rough wooden sledges and rollers used whenever necessary, is brought on spot where it has been previously decided to get erected by the side of the principal road near the village. After some days it is erected, placing some tree leaves on the top of the stone and some liquor is also poured over it. A small feast also follows and the whole ceremony is complete. In this way, the monolithic monuments like those of Khasis and Garos, equal in size sanctified by Angami, Ch khesang, Mao, Rong tribes, in order to commemorate

the great feast given on the occasion, whereas the Khasi-Garos are for the propitiation to the memories of their ancestors in a way like the Japanese Shintoism. The giver of the feast becomes entitled to wear a special cloth. Over his house the big wooden horns are put to proclaim the important status of the man. Before this great feast takes place, there is also a ceremony of pounding large quantities of rice for making ricebeer. All the adult males and females of the feast-giver's clan come together and prepare the drink.

There is another great feast which we may call a diplomatic feast which is held very rarely, say once in a decade or two, among the feuding or warring villages in order to sheathe the sword and to maintain friendly relations. On this occasion all the able-bodied men of a village go to other village to have the feast lasting two or three days, which the latter would also do on reciprocal basis. During the feast they discuss their mutual problems and settle them in a spirit of warm friendliness and common interest to be unshaken by trivial discontents.

Generally, the Nagas are very fond of dance and songs, though the liking varies from one tribe to another. There are different dances in which men and women dance together as well as separately. In a war dance, men with splendid physique and rippling muscles holding spears and javelins with the shields act all the circumstances of a battle—the advance, the retreat, the wielding of weapons and the defence accompanied by terrific howls and war-whoops or cries. There are also dances like spear dance, imitative dance, bamboo dance and harvest dance, all of them associated with the festivals. They sing different songs—mostly historical, warring, romantic and seasonal events and charms which are handed down orally from generation to generation with very poor musical instrument or without anything at all. In addition to dancing, the young men play jumping and community wrestling occasionally. Here, men of one clan choose of another clan men individually as good mates and wrestle in front of the villagers who assemble and observe them amusingly. Sometimes a stone is usually put at an acute angle from which to take off the object being to jump as much as possible.

There are rare different stone celts mostly triangular, small, longer in size with edge or oval axe in Nagaland as found in the Upper Burma, Cambodia, Malaya, Indonesia and the Island of the Archipelago. The possession and preservation of these polished stone celts which are known to be thunderbolts hurled from the sky in the light-

ning indicates the neolithic traces of the Naga culture.¹ The other stones rarely found only by fortunate people, are believed to bring good and richness or elixir to the possessors. Some of them are placed with great secrecy and sanctity and handed down by a very few persons from generations. Among these stones, are war stones like the one which remains at Makripfü or Makhel. This war stone which is covetously guarded by the king has its power in giving strength to the warriors for the defence of truth and justice. Moreover, it predicts something of a great event as it signalled the coming of the Second World War in Nagaland in 1944. 'There is another stone of thief whose possession enables any man to steal others' things very easily. These all are lively, in the flesh, mind and action of the Naga people.

¹ Pearl, S.E., Kol-Mon-Aman in Eastern Naga Hills, *J.A.S.B.*, 1896, p. 20 and Hall, D.G.E. *History of South East Asia*, London, 1955, p.6.

Prologue of Naga History

Human history is the grain of dust left
behind on earth what man has thought, acted
and produced against environment.

—Naga Maxim

ORIGIN

It is hardly possible for us to give a cohesive account of the early history of the Nagas since very little of it is known due to paucity of written records or chronicles of the times even though a quantity of paleolithic tools and some legends are there from the earliest times to the present. In fact, the recorded history of the Nagas begins, to be exact, with the advent of the British era when the British administrators, philologists, anthropologists and American missionaries started their researches across the vision of centuries upon the historical threads survived in those of legends, traditions, and the background of primitive social, political, economic and religious beliefs, customs and institutions of the Nagas, amongst whom their lives were acclimatised more deeply, and they wrote about them. Though their writings suffered inevitably from the lack of objectivity, fullness of information, comprehension and sometimes misinterpretation of events, there is no doubt about the fact that they are in many respects a great help to a cogent and orderly study of the life and the history of the Nagas. Another source is the scanty references of odds and ends about the Nagas scattered in the Assamese, Manipuri and Burmese chronicles, which are sometimes woven round the unhistorical and metaphorical events. The early Hindu rulers of Kamrup between 4th to 12th century A.D. hardly mentioned about them. Writing in the second century A.D. after the Greeks had reached the apex of their civilization through centuries from the primitive barbarism, Ptolemy, the celebrated Greek scholar gives the word, 'Nangolong' meaning the realm of the naked people almost exactly, where the Nagas are now ¹ But we cannot take it with certainty of what he described as there were many naked people in parts of India at his time. Alhaib-un-Disa Talish, the Mughul historian who accompanied the invasion of Mir

¹ *Geographia*, VII, ii, 150 A.D., p. 18.

Jumla, the Governor of Bengal in Assam in 1662 refers to them as "Nanga". Tavernier, the European traveller also mentions the Nagas who wore pig's tusk on their caps, very few clothes on their bodies and great holes for ear-rings through the lobes of their ears.

However, it is well-nigh difficult for us to know how they went through the past many centuries before migration took place.¹ What we are required to know about them is to study their related legends, stories and culture that have transmitted from one generation to another by oral tradition than by writing, some spoiled, mutilated or modified and others intact, now extant, in spite of Christian Nagas' assaults upon them. Still a lot of strenuous efforts are needed to find out the missing links in their history.

The origin of the Naga race is veiled in obscurity as the word itself proves and every conclusion is not certain. There are different theories, idealistic as well as materialistic, ascribing to Supreme Being seemingly cataclysmic cosmos. According to Naga idealism, the first human beings were created by God and thereafter were destroyed by the flood when the earth was over-populated and filled of sin. Then the present men are, it is held, the descendants of a couple who survived the catastrophe because of their virtuous deeds—as almost identical to Biblical story of Noah or a Divine Being made man and woman of clay and put life into them, or again, a woman gave birth to tiger, spirit (god) and man or a woman was impregnated by cloud, etc. On the other hand, materialistic theory holds that man emerged out of the material composition of the soil, or from a lake, or from stones, or from a cave in the bowels of the earth in some land somewhere in the south or from the eggs in some cases. Another tribe equates human being to fire, water, air, earth and space. By contrast, another tinge of the Darwinian basis of human evolution is also found in the legend that at a time, all animals including men and birds lived together in perfect harmony, talking with one another. But after that age the world plunged in a period, probably about the beginning of pleistocene, the earliest geological time, when men had begun to evolve into the present form from a certain anthropoid-ape forms having tails, by a long complicated natural process of biological transformation in the course of inescapable struggle for survival against man and against environments. It is not known to the Nagas

¹ Remains of palaeolithic tools discovered in Nagaland and Manipur tend aptly to indicate that some of their ancestors migrated into these hills and settled in last centuries, B.C.

that they are descendants of the snake-spirits¹—Nagas, as recognised in Hinduism and Buddhism, that had mingled superhuman and serpent qualities, albeit there are many related stories concerning human beings and snakes as are also found in the Meitei legend of Pakhangba.

Whatever may have been the origin of man out of the theories indicated above, it is crystal clear that their ancestors most probably were the primaeval non-Chinese Chiang tribes, who nomadized herding cattle, including yak in east-Central Asia upto the further north-west borders of China many centuries before the Christian era and began to spread towards the east, west, north and south as the legend narrates, right in the western China, Indo-China, Malaya, Thailand, Indonesia, Philippines, Burma, Tibet, Bhutan, Sikkim and Nepal right upto Ladakh in the north-west of India.² Dr. W.C. Smith, a Christian missionary sociologist in *Ao Naga Tribes of Assam* made an analytical proof of the Nagas' affinity with Dyaks and Kayans of Borneo, the Battack of Sumatra in Indonesia, the Igorots and Ifugaos of Philippines and some tribal groups of Formosa in cultural similarities with one another like head-hunting, dormitory dwelling houses, disposal of the dead on raised platforms, a great freedom of intercourse between the sexes before marriage, betel-chewing, aversion to milk as an article of diet, tatooing by pricking, absence of any powerful political organisation, the double-cylinder vertical forge, the simple loom for weaving cloth, a large quadrangular or hexagonal shield, and residence in hilly regions with a crude form of agriculture. Again, "the early home of the peoples of Eastern Asia was in the upper reaches of the Hoang-ho or Yellow river of China, and that from this centre the Tibetans moved westward; the early tribes of Indo-China, south-west; and the Chinese, south-eastward. According to this view the progenitories of the Karen probably formed a part of the southward migration."³ Definitely, therefore, the Nagas were the same group, included in the same different tribes or peoples in Burma, Lepchas in Sikkim, Bhutias in Bhutan and other tribes of Assam.

MIGRATION

Most probably the Nagas, it seems, migrated towards their present homes from different directions across the barren mountains possibly following the overland route or treks extensively used by

¹ Rowney, H.B. *The Wild Tribes of India*, London, 1882, pp. 167-75

² White, J.C. *Sikkim and Bhutan*, Reprinted, Delhi, 1971, p.7.

³ *Burma Census Report*, 1911, p. 60.

the Chinese traders and embassies between China and India as well as by embassies from Rome and Constantinople to the courts of China as early as the last centuries B.C or the beginning of Christian era, perhaps from the area of modern Yunnan through the Upper Burma and Assam. Nevertheless it is difficult to determine their migration because their dwelling sites and their remains afford no clues to our study, although, now some available palaeolithic tools made of stones in the caves and rocks throw light on it. Besides, from a year and date unknown to the twentieth century A. D., there have been continuous migrating movements from the southern China and the other parts of South-east Asia to Burma, Assam and Chittagong hill tracts. The latest immigrants are the new Kuki tribes following the old Kukis who had settled in the Lushai hills as called themselves Mizos in Assam, Kukis in Manipur, Hmars in the North Cachar hills and Chins in Burma. In Burma this process of migration still continues. The causes of migration too are not clearly known. However, from the study of available legends and movements, it appears, that they may have migrated as adventurous pursuiterers or they found it difficult to make a good livelihood at the places where they were.

The Tibeto-Burman speaking people of the Mongolian race that were loosely termed as "Nagas" came from Burma and spread gradually like an irresistible tide throughout the present Naga-inhabited mountainous massifs where they entrenched themselves, preserving their customs, beliefs and languages almost intact when they found good land for cultivation and for their animals, while some of the allied tribes of the Nagas like Karen, Kachin, Singpho, Chin, Shan, and others settled in Burma permanently after they had come from the western China. It is not known exactly also from which directions they had migrated even their tribal legends indicate the course from south to the north. Yet, it looks possible that the first wave of migrants were the Maos (Shipoumai), Angamis, Semas, Rengmas, Rongmai and Lothas who moved from the south through the mountain-fringes touching the valley of Manipur to the north. Then, they settled down at Makhriphfü, a village in Mao area near the hills of Japfu. After living there for some years, Shipoumai, now better called Maos, settled permanently down in this area where Maharmai or Marams closely allied to Meiteis also came in latterly, whereas the rest went through different directions to different places where the Angamis, Semas, Rengmas, Chakhesangs, Zeliangrongs and Lothas are today. On the eve of their departure, legend says that they made a witness of an indigenous

pear tree there with the resolution followed by all of them that they should observe 'Genna' wherever any branch of this tree falls or breaks in such a manner as to relate their fraternal relationship with one another. Accordingly, the Mao people through the king of Makhriphfü use to send the message to all the Naga village-states about such an occasion. This tradition has been continuously observed till the advent of Christianity whose influence has made some people neglect it as blasphemous or as a satanic act. However, this tradition goes on very dimly among the non-Christian Nagas even today.

The second wave of immigrants comprised the Aos, Changs, Kheinmunghans, Sangtams, Yimchungers and Tangkhuls. They are believed to have migrated from Thangdut, near the Chindwin river in Burma by different routes and in different times. The Konyak Nagas came to their present hills from the north-east of Burma. The Aos' migration route is believed to be from Burma through the Tangkhul, Chakhesang and Tuensang areas to the present Ao villages. Noctes, Tangsas, Wanchos and Pakans trace their original migration to Burma. Thus, all of the Naga tribes came to settle in their respective present hills and mountains. They established tiny sovereign village-states like those of the ancient Greek city-states in the sense that a village-state contains an organized community of persons almost from 200 to 1,000 persons or more, permanently occupying a particular portion of territory with its recognized delimited boundaries with stones, rivers and mountains within which the villagers have free right to practise jhum and terrace cultivation, to fish, if a river or lake is in the area and to hunt in the forest, having its own organized sovereign form of government characterized by the customary laws and traditions in an unwritten character, as obeyed by the inhabitants.

Unfortunately the Naga tribes entered into another savage period, as we have seen above, in which they distinctively waged the head-hunting wars from within or from without for supremacy with little prowess and during which no appreciable advance of any sort could be made. More unfortunately, they never managed to establish a single sovereign state of all the village-states or anything else approaching it under the control of one king or chieftain whose authority over them would be continuous and failed to maintain what we may call Naga country and the modern concept of national unity and character. Rather feuds and wars among the Nagas themselves ossified and became the order of the day. The result was that they lived disunitedly fragmented into the small sovereign village-

states, each under its own king or chief, independent of its neighbour. Occasionally they were clubbed together to fight against the threat of external inroad from powerful neighbouring invaders particularly Meiteis and Assamese. Such unity of thought and action disappeared as soon as the danger was over. In no time, they returned to their state of hostility and isolation. The only time they stopped their war was in a state of friendship through feast or consensus. Thus, the history of the Nagas down to the time of the British invasion has been the history of these village-states, of the head-hunting wars, or petty tribal feuds, or squabbles and rivalries inherent in nomadic life in spite of the cementing of good tradition of political, social and economic development, of uniting against the outside invaders, and of making friendship among themselves. But somehow or other, they managed to live primrose path in their own village-states without a government, each being fiercely zealous of its independence so as the necessity of forming a common government also did not arise, since they did not entertain any ambition to conquer the other territories. Notwithstanding, for this they have been rightly condemned, though the critics should remember that a village-state had been like a model state prescribed by Aristotle. In other words, every village has the feature of a pristine sovereign state and deals with the other neighbours, big or small, as freely as a modern state does. The state of mind and things in Naga village-states in early periods seems like the celebrated opening lines from Charles Dickens' *A Tale of Two Cities*: "It was the best of times, it was the worst of times, it was the age of wisdom, it was the age of foolishness. It was the epoch of belief, it was the epoch of incredulity, it was the season of light, it was the season of darkness, it was the spring of hope, it was the winter of despair, we had every thing before us, we had nothing before us, we were all going direct to heaven, we were all going direct the other way."

NOMENCLATURE OF NAGA

We know that there were earliest Mongolian settlers in Assam known as Kiratas, Cines, ect., according to the Vedic Aryan literature, as early as 1,000 B.C. But very little is known as to who these people may have been. Later on the Kacharis to whom the word 'Naga' was not applied appeared. The other Monglian hordes to whom 'Naga' applied by the plains people of Assam had different distinctive names of their tribes, village-states and to a lesser extent of their clans which were with them, before they migrated to the present homes. Whatever may be their name and the period of migration, they had

settled permanently for years without caring for their historical past, in their respective well-fortified sovereign village-states as described above with their own tribal names. Here it was difficult for the other people to have access to the unknown hills and jungles since no communications with the outside world existed. But early Indo-Aryans, Mongoloid-Dravidians in Kamrup and Bengal or the Ahoms in Upper Assam collectively called the primitive tribes who occupied the area between the north east of the Brahmaputra river and the Irrawaddy river of the Upper Burma as the 'Nagas'. On the other hand, the Meiteis, a mingled tribe of the diverse tribes with advanced civilization became reluctant to identify themselves with the other tribes and thus used to call them as 'Haos' (Nagas).

It is not known to us explicitly how and why the Assamese and Bengalis derive the word, 'Naga' and apply it to these particular tribes. In this way the source of the word itself remains mystery. Different interpretations are put forward on the physical, psychological and mythological assumptions. Gait writes: "The collective designation by which they are known to the Assamese seems to be derived, as suggested by Holcombe and Peal, from *nok* which means "folk" in some of the tribal dialects. When strange parties meet in the plains, they are said to ask each other '*Tem Nok e*' or '*O nok e*', meaning, "What folk are you?" The word is also found in village names, such as *Nokpan*, people of the tree, and *Nokrang*, people of the sky. In this connection it is worth noting that the Khonds call themselves *Kui Loka* and the Oraons, *Ku Nok*. The lengthening of the first vowel sound in the Bengali and English rendering of the word is probably due to the old idea that it connected snake worship".¹ The conclusion of this, they passed on the Naga customary habit of calling each other when they met as strangers on the way, which is the Nagas practise even today, cannot be ruled out as wrong one also.

Further it seems, the Assamese speaking the Sanskritised language mixed with indigenous Austric language may probably have borrowed either from the Sanskrit word 'Naga' which means mountain, or 'Nanga', naked, the latter may derive from the sight of some of the naked hillmen who caused great terror to them. "It has been generally believed", writes Capt. Butler, "that the term, Naga is derived from the Bengali word, *nanḡa* or the Hindustani word *Nanga*, meaning 'naked', crude, barbarous, while another theory suggests the Kachari word Naga—'a young man', and hence a 'warrior'." But Robinson writes, "there seems, little foundation for this

¹ *A History of Assam*, Calcutta, 1905, p. 366.

etymological derivation, as the term has never been known to be applied by the Bengalis either to the Khasis or Garos, with whom they were far better acquainted than with the Nagas; and besides, the Garos especially are habitually accustomed to a greater degree of nudity than any of the Naga tribes with whom we are acquainted." The derivation of the term 'Naga' as used by Bengalis is supposed to be through a popular etymology and confusion with the Naga worshippers of India. Here, we have to know that there are a number of Hindu, Buddhist, Jain, and to a far extent, Cambodian legends which mention 'Nagas', the fabulous race of snakes¹ still worshipped as deities, and as such "philologists find in them direct descendants of the serpent races of the Vedic chronicles; history, less imaginative, knows them as Nangtas or 'Naked savages' who disturbed the borders of the Ahom kings".² But it is found to be historically difficult to link the present Mongolian Nagas to the snake race although Kalhana's writing on the Nagas as first inhabitants in Kashmir may have some link with a number of human-snake stories.³ Verrier Elwin writes: "The name, however, was not in general use among the Nagas until recently. It was given to them by the people of the plains and in the last century was used indiscriminately for the Abors and Daflas as well as for the Naga themselves. Even as late as 1954 I found the people of Tuensang rarely speaking of themselves as Nagas but as Konyaks, Changs, Phoms and so on. In the same way the Mikirs usually speak of themselves as Arlengs, the Garos as Achikrangs (hill people), the Abors as Minyongs or Padams. Gradually, however, as the Nagas became more united they began to use the name of themselves, until today it has become widely popular."

Whatever the appellation 'Naga' may be implicit or explicit, it appears indeed plausible in recent times that 'Naga' has become a genetic or spiritual principle and offered them geopolitical entity and economic-cultural force, possessing a common and indivisible heritage of the past and present which conglomerates an ethical homogeneity and territorial significance. In other words, it implies the homeland of a well-defined territorial or political area occupied by the distinct tribes as woven together into monolithic Nagas than in the obvious and purely formal locational sense that everyday usage attaches the word, Naga to a 'warlike people' on the

¹ Danilou Alain, *Hindu Polytheism*, London, 1964, pp. 308-9 and John Downson *A Classical Dictionary of Hindu Mythology and Religion, Geography, History and Literature*, London, 1928, p. 213.

² *Pioneer*, March 24, 1870.

³ Kalhana's *Rajatarangini*, tr. by Sita Ram Pandit, New Delhi, 1968, p. 32.

frontiers in between India and Burma. Ultimately all the tribes emerge as if they were the descendants of the same racial parents beneath 'Naga', the minor differences they have in belief, culture and language are now more or less looked down indifferent as they share in legends and folk-lore and are rising up in a common history, common pronounced cultural unity, commonly civilization notwithstanding as the time passes by the history of perfect human civilization. Thus Naga which is a myth in the clouds of confusion and obscurity comes out brightly as an idea, a vision and a dream in pervasive form today.

RELATIONS WITH MEITEIS AND KUKIS

After having settled in the hills permanently for some period, the Nagas began to make their impact felt on the surrounding areas, where the Meiteis, Assamese and other tribes were there. The outcome of the contacts from the date of migration or even before that until the British appeared on the scene was in many respects unique. First of all, we will take up the relations of the Meiteis with whom the Nagas had toiled together in many different ways through different centuries. In the beginning, it is said that the Meiteis, Mizo-Kuki-Chins and Nagas were descendants of the three sons of common parents although the Meiteis sometimes seek the explanation of their origin in mythical descent from heaven just as Japanese did from the Sun goddess in 660 B.C. But they were later separated from one another as it was not quite possible for them to live together in continuous process of the nomadic ways of life. At the same time, migration after migration continued in search of better living places anywhere in no-man's lands. In this process, some hordes of people settled in the mountainous regions whereas some others namely Ningthouja, Angom, Luang, Khumang, Moirang, Chenglai and Khabaganba tribes went to the more fertile valley which was a big lake that dried itself up after the first man named Poireton who is believed to be a Chinese settled in it from Kabru hill, as naive traditional view holds. They formed themselves into a united people called Meiteis (probably combination of different people) under the Ningthouja leadership. Yet no one exactly knows to which branch of Mongolians they belong and from what parts they came. However, the hill and plain people, being ingrained in different soils, climate and wide range of environments over the years, became very much different from one another and the corresponding changes in occupation, language, form of government, religion, customs and mental disposition were accentuated in the

relationship under the same animistic ideas and ideals of life. In the meantime, the population too had grown and the people in the hills as well as in the valley tended aptly to call themselves by the different collective tribal names, of course, after their ancestors. The Meiteis called all the numerous tribes in the hills namely the Nagas and the Kukis or Khongjais as 'Haos'.

The Nagas with common characteristics of life, lived disunited, secluded and intact in the hills barely unveiled to outside world or even among themselves for many years although they formed themselves into a self-sufficient community, apparently obtaining almost all their needs and requirements by raising a varied agriculture produce with their primitive methods, skill and weapons in their lands for home consumption even if their agriculture had produced no surplus food.

On the other hand, the Meiteis gradually emerged powerful in the valley as compared to other rough highlanders, under the favourable conditions of the economic betterment in a great measure, available from the fertile soil. They also developed their primitive ways of society, government, economics, religion and culture into a higher cultural advance, a written language with its pristine script, political maturity possible to be described as the Meitei civilisation, which though recognizably an off-shoot of animism, consistently unfolded in brilliance in its own right, and spread over the valley and its surrounding areas till Hinduism penetrated in the valley from Bengal and flourished under royal patronage.

Besides it is scarcely known how the Meiteis seized power and what social and other changes they brought about to the area they occupied and governed. It seems that they had established themselves primarily on naked force and also maintained themselves by force over a conquered populace, alien and enslaved in the process. At first their control was limited only to the central plains, hills being occupied by the Nagas and later on Kukis who did not acknowledge their authority, atleast in the beginning. Then the Meiteis harboured for conquest and civilisation while the hill people spent most of their life in head-hunting and in battling against hunger by producing food and other things for their subsistence from the poor soil of hilly tracts which were wholly inadequate to support in the long run to their increasing pressure of population. Now the Meiteis had become more united, strengthened, advanced and better than the Haos. They established their supremacy completely over the other tribes in a series of struggles which lasted for years and comfortably assimilated them into the sway of their Meiteiland which was under

a strong monarchy wherein the king assumed absolute and divine powers as the head of state, however, characterised by assassination and revolution on the claim of the throne and there brought a rapid consolidation of royal power which made Meiteiland harmonious and compact. King ruled not only with the help of a judicial body known as the 'Cheirap-Chief Court' under administrative divisions, each with central and village officials, but also raised his regular and irregular standing armies, which later on included the Haos to carry campaigns of conquest as well as defence. The soldiers were imparted training in the use of guns, arms and other necessities like clothes, cooking vessels, food, etc. also were duly provided to them.

After consolidation of the kingdom in the valley Meiteis began to invade and subjugate the hill people in a less grandiose plan. They violently attacked the villages of the Naga people virtually without provocation, plundered them, forced tribute from them and got equivocal success. Refusal to pay tribute would further invite the wrath and their houses were destroyed and burnt; the old and weak men, women and children were murdered; the young and strong men and women were carried as slaves who were by custom treated well, the young ones being allowed to take their wives, or were given in marriage to their captors. Without their fighting spirit dissipated, the Nagas often retaliated by raiding the Meiteiland and by killing the people with extreme cruelty for which the Nagas pinned a terror to them. The result of their attempts to force allegiance from the Nagas was, thus the catastrophe that marked the end of friendly relationship and the beginning of the period of hostilities. Such evidences from the early times as well as Noathingkhong, the successor of Konthouba in 750 A.D. were there. This imperialistic tendency in the oriental tribal fashion was motivated by the desire for preservation of the threatening authority by uniting the warring tribes into their land; however they failed to conquer them (the Nagas) permanently. But here we must keep in mind that when such a campaign of invasion began it was concealed in the mists of obscurity except vague certainty that the Meiteis intensely embarked on this ambition probably from the early 17th century A.D. Evidently, we can cite illustrations from the Meitei game of *Kekere Ke Sanaba* which, Dr. Brown mentions, is "only played by the women: in it a number of them join hands dancing round in a circle and chanting the praises of Raja Chingtung Komba in his fight with the Nagas to the north."¹ Even

¹ *Annual Report on the Munnipora Political Agency for 1868-1869*, p. 34.

in the unaccounted history of the Moirang, it is noted that the first king Iwang Fang Fang Ponglenhanba "attacked Naga villages, brought Thanga under his rule, and fixed his boundaries to the north, where the Luang king bore sway. He brought in captives, and buried the heads of his fallen enemies in the Kangla or royal enclosure."¹

The relationship between the Nagas and Meiteis as described above, may be doubtful or debatable from the historical point of view, being void of sufficient historical evidence or exactness before the dawn of cultural conquest of the Aryan Hindus and imperial conquest of the British since the important writings of Meiteis were burnt in the events that followed and the hidden remains are not tangibly clear of what their history was. Unrecorded in the writing the annals of the relations between the two, it is critically true to say that they had fraternal relationship in the beginning as is confirmed by legends brought down from one generation to another, unspoiled but sometimes distorted, lessened or enlarged by to fit in the changing circumstances. The speculative writing of McLennan in *Primitive Marriage*, lifts the veil of the mist to some extent. He puts, "Among many of the hill tribes are current legends which, differing in details, invariably agree in declaring the Manipuris (Meitais) to be the descendants of the youngest of three brothers and therefore the most favoured. These legends are fortified by allusions to such differences as the superiority of the Manipuris in the matter of the clothing and their greater cleanliness. All that these ex post facto stories prove is that the hill tribes recognize their relationship with the Manipuris who, on their side, are for the most part content to acquiesce tacitly in the claim which they cannot explicitly deny. Such a legend as that which explains the ignorance of writing among the hill tribes, is found in many places with just enough variation to adjust it to local peculiarities."

Coming to the other side, the Meiteis still practised animism according to which they ate meat, drank ricebeer and other spirited liquor, buried their dead, like the Naga people. The traditional intercourse of friendship treating each other equal in rights and duties existed between the Meiteis and Nagas in the forms of marriage, mutual exchange of visits and gifts.

But in the 17th and 18th centuries, the Meiteis began to contact the more civilised Hindu people from Bengal through Cachar than the Burmese who unfortunately became their traditional enemies. The contacts had resulted in an extensive impact of the rising tide of

¹ Hodson, *The Meitais*, London, 1908, p. 130.

the Vaishnavite Hinduism preached by Chaitanya (1486-1553). Ultimately it proved to be an event of greater historical importance which completely changed the main, animistic, Meitei life, even if the political influence was tenuous. "It is not," Sir Johnstone in *My Experiences in Manipur and the Naga Hills* writes, "very evident what the religion of Manipur was in early days, but we see no trace of Buddhism. Probably, whatever the belief in early years when the people may have been affected by the intermittent stream of Aryans passing through, for many centuries no religious rites were used before the recent rise of Hinduism, further than to appease evil spirits, as is the custom of the surrounding tribes. There can be little doubt that some time or other, the Naga tribes to the north made one of their chiefs Rajah of Manipur, and that his family while, like the Manchus in China and other conquerors, adopting the civilisation of the country, retained some of their old customs."

At the start, Hinduism had only rudimentary beginnings. Nevertheless, abrupt changes occurred only when king Pamheiba decreed Hinduism as the state religion and philosophy in every nook and corner of his kingdom in the early 18th century and its principal features penetrated virtually into the the whole of the Meitei society. Pamheiba who is believed to be a Naga boy brought up by the Raja Churai Romba, shot his adopted father by accident whilst hunting, and succeeded him to the throne in about 1714.¹ He, however, observed the traditional coronation ceremony by wearing Naga robes on his ascendancy to the throne. All the Naga kings and chiefs were invited to this auspicious day. The king, his ministers and councillors received them heartily and entertained them with feasts and wine. But the ambition to conquer and extend his domain induced Pamheiba to embrace the new faith and to impress upon the Meiteis and Haos of his aggressive shrewdness and integrity. Now he renounced animism, accepted Hinduism and the Hindus as the pioneers of civilization. Later on, he himself assumed a name, better called as Gharib Niwaz, drew upon the Hindu models of government for guidance and attached to himself a sense of semi-divine being. A royal edict was served to the people to adopt Hinduism. "At first the decrees," Hodson observes, "of the king received but little obedience, and the opposition to the change centred mainly round the numerous members of the royal family who were supported, not unnaturally, by the Maibas, the priests of the older religion. Religious dis-

¹ McCulloch. *Account of the Valley of Munnipore and of the Hill Tribes*, p.6. But this account of Pamheiba was repudiated for which, Hodson gives description in his book, *The Meitais*, p. 79.

sent was treated with the same ruthless severity as was meted out to political opponents, and wholesale banishments and executions drove the people into acceptance of the tenets of Hinduism."¹

Gharib Niwaz also brought the Aryan Hindu Brahmins as the missionaries of Hinduism from Bengal through Cachar, a Bengali predominant area, on a rough road sometimes joined by giddy cane, suspension bridges across the rivers—the Jiri, the Makru, the Barak, the Irang, the Lengba, and the Linatak and over nine parallel ranges of mountains constituting the western wall of the Manipur valley, in a journey of about 80 miles. He ordered the people to burn or throw away their old historical and cultural books written in their own script and to commit to writing in the Bengali script. And it is said that while burning such sacred books, some of them quite mysteriously fled away which are supposed to be returned in due course to replace in the new faith. The new converts followed the Hindu rituals, norms and teachings of Lord Krishna by receiving the mantra from a Hindu Guru, by recognizing Hindu festivals observed a day late, by revering the cow, by abstaining from eating meat and drinking wine, head-hunting, by observing rigid rules against ritual pollution and by cremating the dead. A great deal of similarity also developed in the dress and ornaments of the Hindus. The eating habits of the Nagas and the Hindunised Meiteis now being very much different, especially in manner of food underlined their social relations, while the latter gradually shifted to Hinduism in many ways. They could not appreciate with one another's religions, in spite of the fact that they continued to live in an atmosphere of peaceful co-existence, social amity and mutual understanding. They now called themselves better "Manipuris" than Meiteis and changed their original names into Hindu names suffixed with the appellation "Singh", meaning 'Lion' and Meitei Laipak (Meiteiland) into Manipur.²

¹ Ibid., p. 95.

² The word Manipur is derived from Mani (diamond), and pur (place) meaning the place of diamond. This has been related to the Hindu mythology after the event of Hinduism in Meiteiland. The story relates that Krishna and Gopis had an ecstatic dance—the Ras Lila—secretly. On hearing this, Siva asked Krishna to let him see the dance. Krishna agreed to this request on the condition that Siva should see it keeping on the back. Being enchanted to the dance, he and his wife Parvati resolved to have their own dance at a different place. They walked on the Himalayas and reached Kobru, the north-western mountain summit about 2,600 ft. above sea-level where they saw the valley filled with water. With the help of his sacred trident, he drained the water into the Irrawaddy river in Burma. Then, it was found a good place for the desired Ras Lila. Nine celestial nymphs were called in there,

In this way the king contributed considerably to the growth of Hinduism in the teeth of opposition of some Meiteis who strangled Santidas, a stout Hindu missionary in Manipur. Again, as the internal reforms, he infused a sense of superiority and rulership into his people and embarked upon conquest of the Nagas and the Burmese that we will study in the following chapters also.

At the outset the ordinary definitions of caste system inherent in Hinduism as rigid as it became, was not applied to the Meitei social order. Slowly but finally, the Hindunised Manipuris observed themselves the rules of the Hindu casteism and considered the Nagas as rude and degraded, and later on particularly during the reign of Chandra Kirti as the "untouchables" after the Aryan Hindus. Sometimes, strangely the Nagas and Kukis also were accepted to the ranks of the Manipuris if they were converted into Hinduism according to the Hindu rites which comprised ceremonial ablution, impression of the tilak, and investiture with the sacred thread, all accompanied by the recitation of mantras. The king, Brahmins, and members of the royal family gave the thread indiscriminately, but to receive it from the king, and to become his disciple, seemed to be the preferred method. Still the Nagas and Kukis were hardly interested in Hinduism and to leave their animism. As a result, they continued their animism till Christianity was introduced in the middle of the 19th century from the West. It must be remembered that either Hinduism from Manipur or Assam or Buddhism from Burma may have established itself with the occasional support of the interested local rulers, had the mountains obstructing access were not there as an effective check on their spread.

At the bottom, even after the introduction of Hinduism, the Meiteis could not completely preclude, in a broader sense, the uniqueness and continuity of their indigenous beliefs, practices and culture which persisted in the deeper and practical layers of the mind side by side with Hinduism. In the hour of trial and trouble, either be the king or ryot, they turned unhesitatingly towards their old gods; they permitted divorce and remarriage of widows. The Hindu practices like child marriage, seclusion of women and supremacy of Brahmins were not adopted. Even in the important political function, like the coronation, the ceremony was, as a rule, still now per-

each stood on the nine hill ranges around the valley. Having produced musical instruments they danced on the imitation of heavenly dance while Pakhangba, the serpent god, who is supposed to dwell at the core of the world kept the entire place radiated by his jewels with joy. Henceforward that place came to be known as Manipur.

formed by the king and queen in the Naga custom wearing the Naga trappings; a great house in the palace, the original residence of the Meitei king, was made in the Naga fashion, though he did not reside in it, quite curious a practice, wherever the king went there he was attended jealously by two or three Manipuris with Naga rams and accoutrements, as the practice the Manipuris continue today. For all these reasons, the orthodox Hindus regarded the Manipuri version of the religion as being different and much influenced by the hill tribes. Many such Hindus even claimed that they would be 'out-caste' if they had eaten or drunk anything prepared by Manipuris. In other words, one of the episodes of cultural expansion—the spread of Hinduism, however, broke rudely the Meitei animism but it could nevertheless entirely blot out their traditional roots. The other impact of Hinduism upon the Manipuris was that the differences between the Nagas and the Manipuris cropped up widely and became so complex when further wedged later by the British rule in many ways.

Consequently the history of Manipur was one of the series of invasions from the Nagas when the Manipuris tried to exercise their authority over them. The moment the resistance of the Nagas failed, the Manipuris imposed on them the duties such as exacting tribute, providing soldiers, porters and menials. For these purposes, they arranged a broad survey of the Naga village-states and called them Manipuri names without any attempt to administer them with their own people. On the Assamese side, the Naga states were divided into different districts in their maps and given different names arbitrarily, unknown to the Nagas, for the convenience of exaction of tribute from the Nagas whenever they were strong enough. The failure to carry out the orders brought heavy punishment.

During the head-hunting wars among the Nagas themselves, the Manipuris cunningly assisted to arm several friendly Naga villages against their enemies and let them enter the recalcitrant enemy Naga villages and carried out killing, looting and arson at random. At occasion, the Angami and Mao Nagas on the north of Manipur united together to fight the Manipuris. This stand of the Nagas and the subsequent invasions in Manipur caused a great fear to the Manipuris who could scarcely come to the Naga village-states to extract tribute from them as token of submission. On the other hand, Manipur was subjected to successive invasions from the Burmese from 1750 onwards or even earlier in their bid to annexe it to Burma. In order to check the Burmese challenge, Manipuris fell in with the Nagas, Kukis and Assamese, patched up alliances with them and

gained considerable success in the endeavours. In 1764 the Burmese king, Hsimbyushin (1764-76) invaded Manipur, overran it and reasserted Burmese authority over it by appointing Eringba as his vassal. Subsequently the Manipuri king, Jai Singh fled to Rangpur, the capital of Assam, where the Assamese king, Swargadeo Rajeswar Singh gave him refuge. After the good relationship developed between Jai Singh and Swargadeo through the marriage of Jai Singh's daughter with him, Jai Singh accompanied by Assamese soldiers marched to Manipur to liberate his country through the Naga village-states. The Nagas heartily extended every possible help to the king on his way by supplying foodstuffs and also by guiding them along easier and safer routes. Some of them even went to Manipur valley and fought against the Burmese. Eringba, the puppet ruler was defeated and Jai Singh regained Manipur. Thereafter, Manipur was embroiled in a number of the Burmese incursions upto 1825 and it was during this period that Manipur came under the British paramountcy.

In these years, the Nagas and Manipuris did not have much close contact except only that the former, sometimes, were forcibly recruited into the Manipuri army. But on the whole before the First Anglo-Burmese War and subsequent emergence of Gambhir Singh, the nature of relations between the Nagas and Manipuris were sometimes confined to the collection of tribute from the Naga village-states where they exercised influence and control at the time and at other times to reprisals for raids and aggression by periodical armed incursions of Manipuris into the hills. The Manipuri king, Chaurajit Singh fled to Cachar, set out to seek the protection of others wherever it suited his purpose and got it when the Burmese king, Bodawpaya (1779-1819) restored the throne to effete Marjit Singh who offered to place the Naga-Kuki forces at the disposal of the British in their operations against the Burmese. All these were due to the terrible state of internal affairs arising out of the palace intrigues and factional fights on the principal rallying ground that the Manipuri kings, after the advent of Hinduism in the plains, had raised many sons from their many wives, who had little fraternal affection, but who were convinced by ambitious advisers (who were more real fathers) that no one man's claim to the throne was better than another. It was from such a situation matched by many other scattered embers of resentment and apprehension that emerged the horrifying necessity to trigger attempts for a new ruler to assure his position through massacre of his brethren. Almost throughout; this was another constant character of rulership which had

threatened the rising dimension of Manipur as like found in the other parts of South-East Asia. Notwithstanding, in essence the nature of relations between the Nagas and Manipuris before the First Anglo-Burmese War was sometimes confined to the collection of tribute from the Naga village-states where they exercised influence and at other times, to reprisals for Naga raids to their Meiteiland and some times for friendship.

There are other tribes collectively named as the 'Khongjais' or 'Kukis' in Manipur whose relations with the Nagas are worth to be mentioned here in precision. The origin of the term of 'Kuki' still remains unknown even if it is presumed to be an Assamese or Bengali word applied to nomadic tribes constellated into numerous clans exclusive of Manipuris and Nagas in Manipur. The distinction made on the basis of the early and later migration into Manipur namely Old Kukis out of Lushai hills and New Kukis out of the northern Chin hills is only artificial for both are very closely related to each other. Probably, they were in the Lushai-Chin hills for centuries before they were turned out. On the other hand, 'Chin' is a genetic word applied by the Burmese to different hill tribes particularly the Lushai-Chin-Kukis living in between Burma, Assam and Bengal.

The Kukis differ widely from the Nagas and Meiteis in their physical features, language, dress as well as the way of life even though they all belong to the allied tribes of Mongolian race. They are evidently almost the same branch of the Lushais now called Mizos in the Mizo hills, Chins in Burma and Chakmas, Murungs in Chittagong hills, speaking an almost common language of the Burmese branch of Tibeto-Burman family with little local differences and having resemblance with one another in physique, dress, culture social customs, traditions and values. In contrast to the Nagas and Meiteis, they have been nomadic people living thin and scattered in the forested hilltops under the rule of hereditary despotic chiefs with theoretically absolute powers and with the primitive economic type of communism. Buried in obscurity, their origin has been traced to Sinlung in the south-western China and thence the Malay Peninsula to Chindwin valley and to present Chin hills in Burma. From there, being constituted the first fringe of great wave, the so-called old Kuki tribes classified into sub-tribes or clans as Aimol, Chothe, Chiru, Hallam, Korrong, Gante, Langrong, Waiphei, Puram, Kom, Maring, Mhar, Rangkhoh, Pankhu, Biete, Paite, Khelma, Thado or Haokip, Chongsen and Pakan (Anal, Lamgang, Monyon, Monsang, etc.), filtered into Manipur, Cachar, Naga hills, Chittangong hills through the Upper Burma in the 16th century when they were refused to set

in the Lushai hills and driven successively by the Lushais and Suktes from the Lushai-Chin hills. Among them Chiru and Anal people appeared first in Manipur while the Aimols were found in about 1723 according to Manipur Chronicles.¹ All these people came to be known as Khongjais or Kukis in Manipur.

Afterwards the Kukis became more closely related to the Meiteis than the Nagas. They began to intermingle inextricably with them, spoke Meitei language and recruited themselves into the irregular Meitei army. Then the new Kukis like Simte, Paite, Zou, etc., were believed to have migrated from Chin hills to north-western frontier of Manipur most probably in the 18th and 19th centuries. The Kukis particularly the Haokips who were more powerful moved earlier into the northern hills, raided frequently the Tangkhul Naga villages which Manipur claimed to be their territory, for plunder and captives, tried to rule over them and reduced them virtually to slaves. The Manipuris destroyed their designs, sometimes, even enticed them inside palace enclosure and murdered them treacherously. They also used the Kukis on many occasions to punish the Naga tribes whom they were unable to reduce to submission. Not only that, they maintained their influence upon the Kukis by putting on one clan against another. On the north-west the Rongmai, Zemai and Liangmai Nagas suffered enormously when these nomad Kuki hordes had fallen upon their peaceable and weak community, seldom occupying a village site more than three years or so, but migrating and resettling in small and gregarious bodies after having cleared tracts in the wilderness, burnt the bushes and cultivated rice and corns. They also entered into the other parts of the Naga hills just before and after the British had invaded Assam and Manipur in 1824 and assumed control of them. The British settled many of the Kukis down as peaceful subjects of Manipur, armed them and utilised them as 'Sepoy Villages' against the Nagas in the north as well as against the Suktes and Lushais in the south. However most of them remained in the thick forests and fallow land without much intercourse with the Nagas, though occasionally they attacked the weak Zemai, Liang, Rong and Tangkhul Naga villages for tribute. Sometimes they held diplomatic feasts with

¹ Shakespeare, J., *The Lushai-Kuki Clans*, London, 1912, p. 148. Since Anal, Lamgang, Moyong, Mongsang, Chiru, Aimol, etc. had their own historical backgrounds connected with the Nagas than the Kuki-Chins, they were reluctant to be identified with the Kukis for they were at times bloody feuds and wars for supremacy in spite of the intermarriage between them. As such, today they have claimed to be one of the Naga tribes.

the Nagas for friendship in order to settle any dispute that had arisen from squatting on the land of the Nagas when they left exhausted piece of land and built another village for a few years. Otherwise, as the Kukis, small in number in Manipur, had little political, economic and social relations of great significance with the Nagas.

RELATIONS WITH ASSAMESE

To begin with, it is necessary to know that the conditions in Assam were appalling before the invasion of the Ahoms in the thirteenth century. Apart from the geographical difficulties that withheld communications, the different peoples or nationalities from the west, i.e. Bengal, Bihar, U.P., etc. as well as from the east entered the Brahmaputra valley enclosed by hills and mountains on three sides, fought with one another and had not developed any single political consciousness and unity in a state of a continual rise and fall of weak kings. The result was that Assam had dwindled into a number of small kingdoms and principalities without a common sovereign authority which could weld them into one political unit. Pragjyotisha or Kamrup kingdom which was once prosperous under the Mongoloids who were brought into Hinduism according to Mahabharata and Puranas and whose writ ran throughout the length and breadth of the area had fizzled out into petty kingdoms mentionable among whom are the Kamta and the Bhuiyan rulers. The former claimed their descent from the old Kamrup kings and still maintained their capital at Kamtapur near the western Gauhati, while the latter said to have descended from that of Bhuiyan from Kanauj kings too had their own capital. The Koches, a Mongoloid race allied to the Meches and Garos, but were assimilated to the Indo-Aryan philosophy and culture did at initial stage manage to build their kingdom. In the southern hills of Assam, Jaintia kingdom was also progressing within its realm. Tripura on its part was trying to raise a banner of independent authority. Manipur had already established its kingdom on a solid ground, yet was unable to extend beyond its border which would mean fighting out with the Nagas, the Mizos and the Burmese. The Chutias, a Bodo tribe occupied the Sadiya tract while the Kacharis had founded their kingdom on the west and south of the Chutia territory. The Nagas had already taken possession of Tirap frontier, the Naga hills and other adjacent areas. Assam with such conditions of anarchy and disintegration luxuriously afforded a good soil for any strong foreign aggression. The Mohammedans after gaining control over Bengal raided on the western Assam towards the end of the 12th century

but failed to make deep dents into Assam due to strong opposition from its western states although Mohammedan soldiers settled in the Brahmaputra valley.

Meanwhile the Ahoms invaded this part of the country in 1228 A.D., gave it the name "Assam,"¹ one with which to reckon today and built an unified Ahom kingdom along the Brahmaputra river that remained in the saddle till it was conquered by the British. The Ahoms speaking the Siamese-Chinese linguistic family were the Shans (the same word as Siamese or Thai) from the ancient kingdom of Mungmau or Pong lying in the upper portion of the Irrawady valley and the frontier of Yunnan. They were, over and above, one of the Shan groups that swarmed south, east and west from western Yunnan and the Upper Burma at the miserable collapse of the Pagan dynasty and moved into the Menam plains to set up principalities which were later wedged together into Siam or Thailand. About the time of Ahoms' invasion in Assam, the other Shans appeared in Tenasserim, later raided north Arakan in 1294 and founded the Siamese kingdom. In any case, they were a much advanced people in many respects than the Aryan and Mongolian peoples who were already in Assam at the time of their invasion.

When the Ahoms about 9,000 men, women and children with eight nobles led by Prince Sukapha in the wake of the quarrel as to the right of succession to the throne were on the way to the Brahmaputra valley through Patkai range standing like Khyber pass in the west, they attacked the Naga villages for foodstuffs and conquest and ransacked them when the latter offered stiff resistance. This bitter and hostile action of the Nagas enraged Sukapha so much that some of the Nagas were captured, killed and in some cases, roasted to be forcefully fed to their relatives. Such horrible display of brutality coupled with the superiority of the trained forces of the Ahoms brought the Nagas-Wancho, Nocte, Tangsa, Konyak, Ao and Lotha tribes under their control, howsoever temporary the occupation was. The other tribes like Morans, Borahis, etc. gave in easily and were absorbed into the Ahom population of the places in which they were settled, although they were able to presume their identity as scattered minority people living among the Ahoms. But since this event, the relations between the Nagas and the Ahoms or later on, Assamese followed a curious course of war and friendship following raids and counter-raids after

¹ It is said that Assam is derived from the word, 'Asom' which means 'unequaled' or 'peerless' applied to the Ahoms by local men in token of the admiration of their courage.

an interval, by each side with spells of peaceful alliance from time to time while the Ahoms' assimilation into the local communities, may be slow in process, began to take place as the Ahoms brought their womenfolk with them from there (original homes) in less numbers and their kingdom took firm root in no time on the Brahmaputra valley. From the beginning the Nagas living near the plains used to submit and pay tribute nominal to the Ahom kings in the form of mithuns and other commodities whereas the Ahoms, in return, granted to the Nagas revenue-free lands and fishing waters on the tacit understanding that they would not carry any predatory raids in the plains. These lands were called 'Naga-Khats' in Assamese and their Assamese managers, the 'Naga-Katakis'. The tide of this happy sort of relations fluctuated between hopes and fears under force of circumstances.

But the Ahoms, thereafter concentrated their time, energy and power on the betterment of internal administration in a feudal system based on slave labour but depending for its military power on 'Paiks' synonymous in English free-born soldier cultivators, who between the ages of 15 and 50, were obliged to render service in the army as well as in public works. They fought wars of expansion against the Chutias, Kacharis, Mikirs and various other tribes in the valley from the time of Sutepha, the son of Sukapha to the rule of Susenpha. Either were they driven out by the Ahoms into the hills or assimilated into the Ahom administration. The resistants were not only defeated and replaced by the Ahom administrators but also were enslaved or resettled elsewhere. The tribal or village rulers who submitted to them were generally left to their own means, subject to the payment of tribute, the providing of Paiks as required, and of course, administering them if internal disputes arose. Even these years were marked by occasional raids by the Nagas against the Ahoms, but without much damage.

In 1439 Susenpha, a son of Suphakpha by a Tipam princess, ascended the throne. The Nagas invaded the Ahom kingdom during his reign. And the Ahom troops led by the king himself attacked the Tangsu Nagas but were defeated in the battle in which the Nagas killed one hundred and forty Ahoms. At the same time, some other Nagas like the Akhampa, the enemies of Tangsu Nagas as the tradition indicates, gave presents including swords to the king as a token of their friendship and allegiance to his authority.

Susenpha died in 1488 and was succeeded by his son Suhenpha. He renewed war with the Tangsu Nagas and the Kacharis. As the battle commenced, the Nagas routed and defeated a detachment of

Ahoms in which Bar Gohain, the supreme commander was killed. Finally, the Nagas were defeated by the Ahoms and sought peace. But in 1493 the reign of Suhenpha came to an end when he was assassinated as a result of a palace intrigue spearheaded ostensibly by the Burha Gohain, while the king was supervising the repairs of the palace.

Supimpha, the successor and the son of Suhenpha ruled only for four years during which he tried unsuccessfully to punish his father's assassins. The other memorable event was that of sending one of his wives to a Naga chief who came to royal palace to pay tribute. The king heard of his wife's praise of the Naga of whom she was virtually enamoured, felt incensed and sent her to the chief's village. She gave birth to a son named Senglung of whom she got pregnant from the king. Having succeeded his father Supimpha in 1497, Suhungmung created an office for Senglung of a rank between Bar Gohain and the Burha Gohain in his government. He was very ambitious, wanted to expand his territory and subdue the neighbouring independent states. He converted himself into Hinduism, assumed Hindu title, Svarga Narayan, better known as Dihingia Raja, made his capital at Bakata on the Dihing and successfully repulsed three Mohammedan invasions. The Kacharis and Chutias were humbly subjected into his dominion. Strong measures against the Naga raids were outrightly taken. The revolt of Aitonia Nagas in 1504 was suppressed with unmatched severity under the charge of the Bar Gohain and the Burha Gohain. At last, the Aitonia Nagas acknowledged the Ahom supremacy, sent, as a tradition, a daughter of their chief for marriage along with a present of four elephants as the symbol of friendship and peace and agreed to give axes, gongs and amber as annual tribute.

In the years of 1535 and 1536, Suhungmung entered into a treaty of friendship with the Koch and the Manipuri kings. The Koch raja and his brother visited his palace and exchanged presents. He sent envoys to the Manipur king with presents according to the tradition. The Khamjang, Tablung and Namsang Nagas revolted against the Ahoms. The king entrusted his son Suklen, who had distinguished himself as a gallant warrior in the wars with the Muhammedans, to fight out these Nagas. The Khamjang Nagas were defeated and forced to pay a tribute of one hundred mithuns to the king. The other two Naga tribes made a successful victory in the beginning when they inflicted a reverse upon the offensive Ahom soldiers who had retreated from the battlefield with the loss of four guns. However, these Nagas, too- soon realised their own dangers

that would bring imminent disaster in the face of the trained Ahom troops with mighty force and returned readily the guns after which they submitted themselves to the Ahom king, a cunning way to escape the punishment before the strength of the Nagas would gather to raise head against foreign army.

In 1539 the patricide Suklenmung succeeded his father to the throne and built his capital at Garhgaon. Unfortunately, his reign was characterised by a series of conflicts with the Koch king Nar Narayan, palace conspiracies and a terrible devastation of many places by earthquake in 1548 before he died in 1552. But he gave aid to the Banpara Nagas against the Banchang Nagas and assiduously followed the policy of setting one Naga tribe against other in dealing with them. Banpara Nagas were happy when Banchang Nagas were defeated; their chief was imprisoned and his property like buffalo, bison and other booty was seized. The Garhgaon tank was excavated; the Naga Ali which run through the Gadhuli Bazar Mauza from the Bar Ali to the Naga hills was constructed and also the embankments at Kahikuchi and Changin mukh.

After Suklenmung's death, his son Sukhampha ruled Assam from 1552 to 1603. He sent an Ahom expedition against the Aitonia Papuk and Khamteng Nagas in 1555. The Nagas fled away leaving behind a large quantity of booty to fall into the hands of the Ahoms. But on the way back from the expedition, a large number of Ahoms were ambushed and killed by the Nagas. In 1569 another expedition was sent against Phusenta Nagas who escaped to Papuk Naga village. Once again, the Aitonia Nagas revolted against the Ahoms in 1573 but were defeated and had to pay a heavy fine.

Succeeding his father Sukhampha, Susengpha, better known as Pratap Singh (1603-1641) fought wars with the Kucharis and the Mohammedans. He built up an efficient system of administration and developed backward tracts of his kingdom by constructing roads, embankments, dikes and tanks. An embankment as means of protection against the raids of the Nagas was raised and no Naga was allowed to cross it without permission or unless accompanied by a peon or Kataki.

His two successors—Surampha (1641-1644) and Sutyinpha (1644-1648) did not have much contacts with the Nagas except Khamtings and Dafas were suppressed, till Sutamla, known by his Hindu name Jayadhvaj Singh (1648-1663). Sutamla sent out an expedition in 1650 to punish the Lakma Nagas for a raid and when they offered resistance, their village was burnt. The Nagas could not be completely stamped out as they kept on raiding the Ahom territory. Then

four years later, another expedition was ordered against the recalcitrant Nagas. The Lakmas armed with spears surprised the Ahom troops, but were driven off by a detachment of Dafla archers that accompanied these troops. The Ahom troops were attacked by surprise once again, but the Nagas were chased into the hills. The Ahom soldiers found the hills almost inaccessible to follow them because of their unfamiliarity of the terrain. The Nagas' now sued for peace but played foul by treacherously attacking the Ahom envoy who was sent to negotiate peace with them. After receiving the news, the Ahom government sent reinforcements and renewed their advance. The Ahom troops were unable to come up with their nimble foes and destroyed their houses and stores of grain. Eventually the Naga chief surrendered and agreed to pay tribute, and in return was granted possession of a hill feature which previously was a bone of contention between the Ahoms and the Nagas. In 1663 in the battle that ensued, Assam was overrun by the Muslim troops led by Mir Jumla, the Governor of Bengal and had concluded a peace treaty that called for the withdrawal of Muslim troops to Bengal and payment of unimagined heavy tribute to Bengal.

On the agony of great humiliation, Jayadhvaj Singh died without issue and Supungmung whose Hindu name was Chakradhvaj Singh (1663-1669) became the king and started a new monarchical line. Once again, in 1665 the Naga feud came up between the Banpara Nagas and Banchang Nagas. The latter were attacked and driven off by the former assisted by the Ahoms, in spite of stubborn resistance. But the Banchangs returned as soon as the Ahom troops left, and a fresh expedition had to be despatched. They successfully resisted all attempts to take the fort which they had created until Ahom guns were brought up. Ultimately, they could not stand against them and fled. So destroyed their houses and granaries, they were compelled to submission. Meanwhile, western Assam was already occupied by the Mohammedan invaders because the Ahom king had failed to pay off the indemnity. Following Supungmung's death in 1669 a period of uncertainty and chaos cropped up due to palace conflicts. Seven weak kings were enthroned but were deposed of till Gadadhar Singh became the king of Assam in 1681 and ruled till 1696. Before his accession to the throne, he visited many places in Assam and Naga village-states in guise of a trader, cultivator and a Naga. King Gadadhar Singh systematically quelled the internal dissensions which had sapped vitality of the kingdom, imbued patriotism and national spirit to his people, drove out the Mohammedans, encouraged the spread of Hinduism by building temple of

Umananda on Peacock Island opposite Gauhati and took ruthless measures to put down any rebellions. During his reign the Nagas raided the Doyang valley but were suppressed by a punitive expedition and their houses were burnt down. At last they yielded and were pardoned after they had given compensation for the losses inflicted on the people of the valley. Another expedition was sent to crush the Namsang Nagas in which many Nagas including their chiefs were captured and beheaded. Gadadhar Singh died in February 1696, leaving two sons behind.

Now, Rudra Singh, the elder son of Gadadhar Singh, became the king. First of all, he tried to strengthen his government and began to build the palace, temples and tanks around Sibsagar and Lakhimpur in a modern way. The Brahmin priests were brought from Kanauj in U.P. to preach Hinduism. Forts were constructed in order to maintain communications and facilitate the transmission of supplies, and garrisoned at regular intervals along the line of the march. In spite of these precautions, the Nagas gave much trouble and constantly plundered the convoys on their way to Samagudting (near Nichuguard). Troops were despatched and a few Nagas were killed, but it was not until the garrisons near Samagudting had been greatly strengthened that these raids could be stopped. In 1708 the Kachari and Jaintia kingdoms were annexed to Assam. King Rudra Singh died in August 1714 while he was leading an expedition to Bengal. His son, Sib Singh (1714-1744) gave up the plans of invading Bengal and instead, devoted his energies to the proselytization of Hinduism rather than to wars of victory. The change of religion, Gait writes in *A History of Assam*, brought a disastrous effect: "By accepting a subordinate place in the hierarchy of Hinduism, not only did the Ahoms lose their pride of race and martial spirit, but with a less nourishing diet, their physique also underwent a change for the worse. The process of deterioration has gone on steadily, and no one, looking at an average Ahom of the present day, would suspect him of being the descendant of the race of conquerors who, though small in number, gradually extended their rule over the whole of the Brahmaputra valley, and successfully resisted the assaults of the Mughals, even when the latter were at the zenith of their power."

Nevertheless, Hinduism accompanied the Aryan civilization into the Assamese people whose indigeneous religion was fading into confusion and doubtfulness in the midst of hardships, brutality and ignorance. It was a great leap for the Assamese to be superior to the wild surrounding tribes whom later on, the Assamese took as dolts

and savages. But after Sib Singh's death, the tribal people including the Nagas perpetrated frequent raids; the Manipuris and Kacharis became a thorn in the flesh of the helpless Assamese kings when the Burmese occupied Manipur, and the Moamarias revolted incessantly; the supremacy of the Mohammedans was cut off by the British in 1765 when Bengal ceded to the Company government. To add to the complexity, the Singhphos, an outlying branch of the main race of the Kachins¹ in the Hukawng valley appeared in Assam about 1793 and caused disturbances when the Assamese king, Gaurinath Singh was struggling hard with the rebel Moamarias. But the invasions of the blood-thirsty Burmese into Manipur and Assam brought the British rule in 1826.

Under these circumstances in which the weakness of the kingdom both permitted and discouraged the national growth, Assam could not extend her authority properly to the Naga village-states: "Under the ancient Assam government some of the tribes may have been more dependent upon the government than they are now, but the Naga territory was never considered an integral portion of the sovereignty of Assam. It is customary with the Naga tribes to offer trifling presents to the British authorities, as a mark of submission, and something is given in return, in token of amicable feelings ; but that Nagas have never been considered subject to our regular jurisdiction, and nothing in the shape of an assessment has even been imposed upon them."² But some of the Naga tribes inhabiting in the low outlying hills particularly south of the Sibsagar and Lakhimpur districts were the subjects of the Ahom kingdom. They paid yearly tribute in the forms of slave, elephant tusk, spear shaft, hand-woven cloth and cotton to the Ahom kings as a show of owed allegiance, and recruited themselves into the Assamese army. Whenever they became strong they tried to stop the payment and the Assamese in turn, used to attack them and forced them to task. Above all, the Assamese could not control the central and south-east of the Naga hills although most of Naga tribes had social, economic and cultural intercourses with them. Inter-marriage between the Nagas and the Ahoms was not unheard of; gifts and presents were exchanged from time to time to reaffirm cordial relationship. Whenever the Nagas came down to the Assamese villages, towns and capital, the Nagas were protected and as a custom, their spears were kept at the houses of the Naga

¹ Kachins are of Tibetan-Mongolian origin living almost exclusively on the summits and ridges of hills like Nagas at elevations between 2,500 and 6,000 ft. in the Upper Burma region.

² Butler, J. *A Sketch of Assem*, London, 1847, p. 152.

hosts (katakis). The Assamese reserved some agricultural farms and fisheries for the use of friendly Nagas whom they called Bori (submissive) Nagas as distinguished from the Ahori (non-submissive) Nagas. Peaceful trade and commerce flourished between the Nagas and Assamese. They bartered and sold their agricultural products like salt, cotton, ivory, wax, Naga dao and different medical herbs in exchange for rice, clothes, beads and medicines from Assam. The Assamese depended on the Naga salt manufactured in great quantity from the brine springs on their hills before it was imported from the west when the British came in. In some cases the salt wells in the hills were made joint property of the Nagas and the Ahoms. The Assam government raised heavy revenue on the imported salt from the Naga village-states. But, the British company government having found the taxes exceedingly heavy abolished all the duties on salt. These economic relations infused cordiality and mutual understanding between the two peoples.

Above all, the intercourse of politics and trade between the Nagas, the Meiteis and the Assamese gave rise to a cultural mixture by the Manipuri and Assamese languages which made great progress towards the hill tribes outside the plains. Particularly the Naga tribes speaking different languages not known to one another, the Assamese and Manipuri languages became the media of their expression and a strong unifying force among themselves and with outsiders while the Burmese language and Buddhism was slowly penetrating the other hill tribes of Burma.

As a whole, the relations between the Nagas, Meiteis and Assamese were sometimes reprehensive, sometimes good and durable, extending over centuries. The factors working behind these were, in general, the division of different Naga tribes, each one hostile against the other, the advantage of which was derived by the Meiteis and Assamese to establish their hegemony in the region, the quarrels and murders among the princes or rulers of Assam and of Manipur, the oppressive rule over their subjects, the maintenance of Hindu caste system by Assamese-Meiteis and the unfavourable geographical conditions. As such neither of these peoples by and large was united to meet any external aggression and as a result of which they had to fall first to the Burmese and later to the British. We can even say that the history of the relations between the Nagas, the Meiteis and the Assamese had been characterised by exacerbation, conflict, contemplation and friendship and that this enigma lingered on in the later periods.

Crucial Period and British Invasion

"We believe that happiness is the fruit of Freedom,
And Freedom that of valour, and we do not shrink,
From the danger of war."

—Pericle

FIRST ANGLO-BURMESE WAR (1824—26)

The beginning years of the 19th century were marked by the struggle for ascendancy between the Burmese imperialist forces and the British who were now spreading their tentacles over the Eastern valleys and mountains after having established themselves firmly in the plains of Hindustan. A confrontation was imminent and it came in the form of the First Anglo-Burmese War during the reign of Lord Amherst in India. It was after the collapse of the Burmese military might and political influence throughout Assam and Manipur that the British brought various hill tribes, including the Nagas surrounding the plains of Assam and Manipur into their dominion. Now, we will study the reasons which precipitated the two years' war between the British and the Burmese.

The Burmese¹, of Mongolian origin, who migrated in the remote past from the Western China and Tibet, probably through the courses of Irrawaddy and Salween rivers developed an advanced monarchical system of government and struggled successively with the other tribes—the Shans or Thais in the hills of north-east and Talaings in the deltas of the Irrawaddy and Sittang rivers and in Tenasserim and other immigrating tribes contending for supremacy for a long time.

They founded their dynasties at Tagaung in the north in the early centuries A.D., followed by another dynasty connected with

¹ The Burmans were the most powerful, civilized tribe among all other tribes such as the Shans, Kachins, Talaings and others—the important of which were the Karens, Nagas, Kukis, Chins, Was, Kayahs, Mons and Arakanese. Having established themselves as a ruling tribe, the country was called Burma and its people the Burmese. But other tribes, who were not Burmans, refused to let themselves be called as Burmese and demanded independence; the Burmese government has not been able to solve it completely even today. There were other people in Burma, comparatively recent migrants from Chittagong into Arakan, from Manipur into Upper Burma, from Madras, Thailand, Malaya and China into Pegu, Tenasserim and other parts.

them at Prome and succeeded in its turn by another at Pagan whose kings ruled till 1298. This Pagan dynasty, founded by the king Anawratha in 1054 A.D., witnessed the introduction of Buddhism and the fine building of Ananda, the germ of the Pagan Pagodas in the reign of Kyanzithe (1084-1112). But this dynasty degenerated into disaster and the last of them—Narathihapate earned the vengeance of Kublai Khan when three of the ambassadors he sent to him were executed along with their retinue and lost his kingdom in 1289. Then a number of small principalities emerged. Meanwhile, another Burman dynasty re-established itself at Toungoo in 1313 and remained in the saddle for more than two hundred years up to 1540. Contemporaneously, an ancient Talaing dynasty at Thaton and Pegu from 537 to 1050 A.D. that had survived numerous debacles now gave in and became a vassalage to the Burmans of Pagan dynasty till 1287. In the same year, the Shans established themselves at Pegu till they were ousted by the Burmans of Toungoo in 1540. After consolidating his position in Burma except Arakan, king Bayinnaung (1551-81) of this dynasty conquered large parts of Siam (Thailand) and Manipur in 1559, got tribute from their chiefs and exchanged missions with Bengal and Colombo. But his enormous conscriptions of men for a huge army and constant warfare reduced his state into desolation. The Siamese (Thais) invaded Burma, and Arakanese raided and burnt Pegu and its king, Nawdabayin was murdered. The kingdom disintegrated till Anaukatlun (1605-28) gained power and impaled its Portuguese Governor, de Brito. Thereafter followed the years of chaos with a number of weaklings ruling from Ava. On the other hand, the Upper Burma was twice overrun by the Ming and Mahu Chinese and five times by the Manipuris. The authority of Ava over Pegu diminished till 1740 when the Talaings set up one of their henchmen as the king and the following ten years revaged the country round Ava. This oppressive rule of the Talaings was put to an end by Alaungpaya who founded the last strong Burmese dynasty. This dynasty ruled effectively, despite a number of Shan eruptions from Siam, and its result was that the Shan kingdom of Pong whose capital at Mogoung was annexed to Burma in 1752.

King Alaungpaya (1752-60) regained all the lost dominions, captured Siam, defeated the Katheis, subjugated the Talaings, established himself in Rangoon and made it his capital while Ava was left to his son Hsinbyushin (1763-76) who invaded the Siamese capital, Ayuthaya in 1767. A predatory Chinese design was also repelled. Bodawpaya, another ferocious blood-thirsty son of the great king

Alompra (1782-1819) annexed Arakan which was hitherto an independent kingdom and reconquered Manipur in 1813. His successor, Bagyidaw (1819-37) re-occupied Manipur and annexed Assam to the Burmese empire in 1821, uprooting those people from their original homes and making them subjects.

The Burmese forces stationed in the vast valley of Manipur and its Raja Marjit Singh with his two brothers fled to Cachar. This created hardship for the Cachar Raja who subsequently appealed to the British for help. When the latter did not respond to his request, he turned towards Burma. Seeing the immediate danger in the Burmese possession of Assam and Manipur and threat to Cachar, the British decided undeviatingly to prevent the Burmese and declared Cachar as a British-protected state. At the same time, the Burmese rule and influence continued to spread in Assam despite Assamese palace conspiracies. Raja Chandrakant of Assam was dethroned in the wake of a revolt. Responding to his entreaties for help, the Burmese reinstalled him on the throne. But the un-imagined cruelties which the Burmese perpetrated on his people like driving them into bamboo enclosures where they were burnt alive, piqued him and he walked into the British protection by asking political asylum. This enraged the Burmese who attacked the Assamese territory and took away 30,000 Assamese including the Nagas living at the fringe of the foothills as captives into Burma.

On the other hand, from the 17th to 19th centuries, the British, once a barbarous tribe discovered by the Romans were embarking upon their imperialist expansion in India through war and diplomacy at the outlet of the Industrial Revolution. First of all, Marco Polo, the Venetian adventurer sojourned, after Alexander's great military invasion, to China through Calicut and Andaman-Nicobar Islands in 1492, leaving a remarkable trace and lure of eastern wealth to the West. In 1498 the sea-route to India was discovered by Vasco da Gama, a Portuguese navigator just after Christopher Columbus found America. Thereafter the European traders—the Portuguese, Dutch, French and English came to India ostensibly for commerce and trade. But the glaring decay of the Mughal Empire after the death of Aurangzeb and the emergence of the Marathas in India kindled in them ambition of rule. Dreaming of seizing political power in India, they got themselves embroiled into a struggle for supremacy which was but inevitable. Ultimately the British fought off the Portuguese and Dutch, although Goa remained a Portuguese colony till 1961. The fate of the French was sealed at the battle of Plassey where the Nawab Siraj-ud-daula of Bengal lost in 1757 in

spite of French help. Now the political power had eventually passed over to the British company. Along with, some kingdoms were annexed outright while others submitted without much fight. At the time, the British had not made up their mind to expand their authority to Assam—another world—with its roads frightful like the path leading to the nook of death, and its rivers beyond limit and estimate. But there were western and eastern frontiers where effective British control was absolutely necessary for the maintenance of power in India, lest they should be thorns in their flesh if they fell in the hands of Russia, Burma or France. This calculation of the British manifested itself in conflicts that followed which aimed at keeping frontiers—Afghanistan, Burma, Assam and Manipur—safely under their thumb.

In Burma, the Dutch and the French had failed to establish their trading companies. On their part, the British also had not been successful to set up commercial relations with the Burmese right since the 17th century. In order to avoid war and to have friendly relations with the Burmese, the Company government sent envoys to Burma.¹ But these missions were not only fruitless but also added to the Burmese arrogance and obduracy.

Finding their efforts at forging friendship with the Burmese foiled, the British decided to compel obeisance of the Burmese. Moreover, the Burmese expansion in Assam, Cachar and Manipur and their designs at more territories of Bengal had scared the British. Flushed with victory, the Burmese were making ambitious plans of invading Bengal. Above all, the increasing Russian interest in Asia, after the fall of Napoleonic France forced the British to move ahead in the field. The Burmese insolently made constant demands for the surrender of fugitives, particularly Arakanese who revolted in 1797 against the Burmese conquest of their land in 1784, fled from there into the Chittagong hill tracts and other parts of British territory and conducted raids into Burma. The refusal of the Company government to oblige the Burmese request further strained their relations. Then the Burmese encroached on the Arakan side and laid claim to the island of Shahpuri, situated at the mouth of the Naaf river. As a bone of contention the question of Cachar raised its head; its kingdom in the Surma valley regained strength by the downfall of Assamese rulers in the early 19th century. But the Manipuris threatened its integrity from 1813 onwards when the Burmese occupied their kingdom as already mentioned above. The British declared war against

¹ Lt. Col. Synes in 1795 and 1802; Captain Cox in 1797; and Capt. Canning in 1803, 1809 and 1811.

the Burmese on all possible fronts after they had decided to drive them out and restore peace and administration in the region.

The main war operations of the British in Assam began on 13 March 1824 when a British force of 3,000 men marched along the banks of the Brahmaputra without much opposition till it arrived at Gauhati on March 28. Here the Burmese had erected strong stockades which were later on deserted by them without any fight since their troops were withdrawn to meet the needs in Burma itself. This made the British advance possible as far as Koliabar, a little beyond Nowgong. David Scott, a civilian Agent to the Governor-General for Eastern Frontier who died at Chirrapunji in 1831 played a remarkable role in taking measures against the Burmese.¹ But unable to face difficulties arising from rainy season which made further advance hazardous, the troops returned to Gauhati and the Burmese re-occupied Nowgong where they inflicted atrocities on the inhabitants. "Some they flayed alive, others they burnt in oil, and others again they drove in crowds into the village *namghars*, or prayer houses, which they then set on fire."

On 17 May 1824 the British force met a disastrous reverse at Ranu in the Chittagong district where a small detachment of British soldiers was stationed. This defeat compelled the British to withdraw their troops from Sylhet to protect Chittagong while the Burmese reinforced in Cachar. The British troops also were sent there. Again in the end of October, the British resumed the operations against the Burmese, occupied Jorhat and advanced further, meeting only minor resistance on the way. The Burmese forces at Rangpur secured a truce wherein it was agreed that they were permitted to retire into Burma from Assam on the condition that they would abstain from any act of aggression like ravages on the road and forcible taking of the inhabitants away as slaves. Accordingly the Burmese abandoned Assam and went through circuitous route—Bisa Pass in the Singpho-land. But on reaching the border they conspired with the Singphos and Khamptis to attack the British. In June 1825 Captain Neufville conducted a victorious campaign against them across the Patkai range, and set free about 6,000 slaves who had been taken as captives by Singphos, most of whom were north-east Nagas. But the Burmese could not come over the mountainous village-states for fear of harassment, where the people whom they call "Kachyans" i.e., Kacha, Rengma, Sema, Lotha, Angami, Chakesang, Mao, Tangkhul Nagas lived.

Fresh campaigns were sent against Burmese in Cachar and

¹ See Barooah, *David Scott in North-East India* (1802-31), Delhi, 1970.

Manipur. The Burmese evacuated Cachar completely but made considerable efforts to open a road from Cachar to Manipur without success due to heavy rainfall. Notwithstanding the reluctance of the British in proceeding to Manipur, the request of the exiled Raja Gambhir Singh for permission to advance to Manipur could not be refused. So, Gambhir Singh with his native irregular levies of 500 Manipuris and Kacharis accompanied by Lt. Pemberton who volunteered for the expedition, left Sylhet on 17 May 1824 and obtrusively reached the Manipur valley on June 10. But he returned to Sylhet, leaving behind a small detachment to protect the territory when the inclement weather and dwindling supplies made their further stay impossible. Raja Gambhir Singh regained Manipur and ruled over it except Tammu, the south-eastern corner of the valley where the Burmese had still stockaded. The Manipuris cut off their water supply and finally drove the Burmese across the banks of the Ningthi river and the Kabow valley. But the Burmese, with traditional ferocity, carried through genocide against the fleeing Manipuris and left 2,000 people out of about 6,00,000 that existed before the war. Some of them were taken as captives to Burma.

On the other side, another British contingent marched to Arakan and joined its force in the lower Burma against Ava, the Burmese capital. To make matters worse, the rains set in and brought disease that took heavy toll of lives. The British troops were therefore withdrawn from Arakan, but a few detachments were left on the islands of Cheduba and Rami and on the opposite coast of Sadowry Bhawan.

On 11 May 1824 Rangoon was attacked and captured without much resistance by an expedition sent under the command of General Sir Archibald Campbell with 11,500 men mostly recruited from Madras, and with ships under Captain Marryant. The repulsion of a British detachment at Ramu on the Chittagong tract by the famous Burmese General, Maha Bandula failed to prevent Rangoon from falling into the hands of the British. The Burmese offered little fighting to the advancing British troops and fled into the jungles of Pegu. The hardships of the British for lack of provisions were further aggravated when diseases broke out in the wake of rains. Yet the situation improved towards the end of October when the rainy season was over, and reinforcements reached them. In the meantime, Bandula force was called in to rescue Rangoon in December. He was badly defeated and was compelled to retreat to Donabend, about sixty miles from Rangoon where he had entrenched himself by strong-built stockades. Fortunately for the British,

on 2 April 1825 a rocket got burst accidentally and killed Maha Bandula. This incident abruptly shattered the morale of the whole of the Burmese garrison who fled leaving everything behind. Sporadic encounters did take place, though they could not check the advance of the British. Sir Archibald Campbell captured Prome, from where his force reached fighting all the way to Yandabo in Myingyan district, 60 miles from the capital on 22 February 1826. After some months a peace treaty signed by king of Ava after the dictation of Campbell followed on November 23, bringing to end the war which had raged for over two years, costing about 20,000 men and an expenditure of Rs. 14 crores.

The treaty provided that Burma would pay Rs. one crore as war indemnity, cede the Burmese provinces of Arakan and Tenasserim to the East India Company, abstain from any interference in Assam, Cachar and Jaintia, recognise Manipur as an independent state, admit of a British Resident at Ava, a Burmese envoy at Calcutta and conclude a separate commercial treaty afterwards upon principles of reciprocal advantages to be negotiated. Thus this war secured a lot for the British, although its planning and execution came in for serious criticism. Loss of many men and material was attributed to Lord Amherst's inability to direct the war properly.

In March 1828 the Governor-General resigned for domestic reasons leaving the charge to Bayley and left India. But the British Parliament with its characteristic generosity pardoned him for his errors and extended him cordial thanks for the final success of the operations against Burma. Consequently a British Resident was not accepted till 1830 when Major Burney was sent there, whose diplomacy had some influence at the Court for several years. His successors were treated ignominiously, and in 1840 the mission was withdrawn. Thereafter, the difficulties faced in implementing the terms of the treaty and other factors caused the wars of 1852 and 1885 culminating in the annexation of Burma into the British empire.

In essence, the Anglo-Burmese War had certain significance in the imperialistic march of the British. The immediate effect of the British victory was to deprive the Burmese expansion in Assam, Manipur, Cachar and Bengal and provide the British with the springboard to Assam. Second, Assam and Manipur which were outside the dominions of the various Hindu and Muslim empires throughout history, were, for the first time included in the British sphere of influence. Thus, this preluded the bringing of the people inhabiting the hills of the Eastern Himalayas into contact with the western world. Third, after the war and subsequent death of the famous

General Maha Bandula, the Burmese fell into disintegration. Four, it served the British interests to keep a foothold in Burma for a strong foundation of the British empire in the East by demonstrating to the French not to move beyond Indo-China. Faced with the internal and external pressure, the submission of Assam and Manipur to the British company government was an overture which yielded the company an easy passage to crush the fierce hill tribes of Assam, Manipur and Burma that we will see in the following chapters.

EARLY BRITISH MILITARY EXPEDITIONS

Shortly after assuming authority in Assam and Manipur in 1826, the British contemplated, with great anxiety, as to what next steps they should take for they could not deviate from the commitment to their subjects, failing which the Burmese, intrigued by France, possibly resurrect and pierce into the heart of the most precious jewel of the British Crown—India, although France was passing through a grave crisis in the teeth of survival after the fall of Napoleon the Great. Somehow or other, the British paramountcy had to expand under the pressure and the alert of political circumstances.

During this critical period the British were told that the mountains, hills and forests surrounding the plains and valleys of the Brahmaputra, Surma and Manipur with high and moderate altitude and different climatic conditions were the abodes of numerous formidable and recalcitrant Mongolian tribes, conspicuously called the Nagas, Garos, Khasis, Abhors, Mishmis, Lushais, etc. Among them, the Nagas were the most warlike tribe who had pelted constant raids and disturbances and raised terror upon the neighbours—Assamese and Manipuris—from time to time, as opportunity offered or the prospect of plunder prompted, until very recent times when the latter attempted to sway their sovereignty upon former. Of late, seeing the varying degrees of effective control of Assam and Manipur were whittling away within, the Nagas put different claims as the historian Mackenzie describes: "Many of them advanced claims to rights more or less definite over lands lying in the plains; others claimed tributary payments from the villages below their hills, or the services of Paiks said to have been assigned them by the Assam authorities. It mattered, of course, little to us whether these claims had their basis in primaeval rights from which the Shan invaders had partially ousted the hillmen, or whether they were merely the definite expression of a barbarian cupidity. Certain it was that such claims existed, and that they had been, to some ex-

tent and in some places, formally recognised by our predecessors. The engagements under which the native governments lay were transferred to the British who tried to reconcile them with the requirements of enlightened polity". Whatever might it be like a thunderbolt from the sky, the British had sooner or later to get themselves involved with the hill tribes particularly the Nagas in order to keep their interests going in Assam, Manipur and Burma. The consequence was the British encroachment upon the Naga hills and breaking of their haughty seclusion and isolation with which the Nagas had wrapped themselves for centuries before they made a number of raids against the animist, Hindunised plains people of Assam and Manipur.

Now, the Naga village-states whose topography, population and history were unknown to the British except scanty references appeared to cause a hotbed of anxiety as the Nagas raided the British subjects in the plains. However, the British at that moment had not made up their mind whether to intrude into the Naga village-states and chastise them, notwithstanding that the native kings of Manipur, Cachar and Assam tried hard to keep the turbulent Nagas under control. On the other hand, they encouraged them to conquer and rule the Nagas in conformity with the British policy and began to organise a number of armed police units on semi-military lines for service in the hill areas of Assam like the Cachar Levy in 1835 and Jorhat Militia in 1838. At the same time, availing of the opportunity offered by British support to him, Gambhir Singh, the king of Manipur moved to strengthen his hands against Burma by entering into trade relations with Assam in a big way. The British thought this policy would bring them great dividends, knowing little of the king's ambition whose only object was to extend his authority over the Nagas, even if it may seem ironical. So the first attempts to open up the Naga village-states were made in the interest of Manipur rather than of financial lust of the British.¹

The conditions then prevailing in the Naga village-states were most opportune and they fell an easy prey to the British rapacity, as they never formed a united nation but remained for centuries, as many as small independent villages, being organised and ruled on the principles of the customary laws, morality and a form of primitive anarchism, and were torn asunder by perpetual head-hunting wars and internecine feuds. They lived barbarous, divided, poor, degenerated but alive, free, equal and independent with one another in their sovereign village-states without a common sovereign like

¹ *The Pioneer*, March 27, 1870.

Assamese, Kacharis, Manipuris and Burmese. They living under the comfortable illusion that no alien was likely to penetrate into their hilly strongholds although the coming of the British had been prophesied in their legends long long ago.

After the failure of Manipur and Cachar to subjugate the Nagas, the British were pushed into direct confrontation with the Nagas to safeguard their interests in the area. First of all, the British tried to befriend with them like the Ahom kings did. When friendship was at stake, persuasion, threat, punishment, blockade, destruction and expedition were applied as was done in Africa. The result was "one long sickening story of open insults and defiance, bold outrages, and cold-blooded murders on the one side, and long-suffering forbearance, forgiveness, concession, and unlooked-for favours on the other, varied now and again with tours immovable, deputations and expeditions"¹.

Now we will show how ultimately the British sovereignty was established in the Naga village-states in a period of about 50 years by explorations and punitive expeditions (to use the official term 'promenade') undertaken by the British to quell the Naga uprisings at the cost of much bloodshed and which furthered the penetration of their policy and influence into the Naga mountainous states. Besides, to govern them more effectively, the British government adopted a policy of 'divide and rule' with minimum force through the local officers associated with the native rulers as this policy, first introduced in the 1850s, was successful in building one tribe to be used in fighting against another, whenever expedient with the least British participation.

In January 1832 the British captains—Jenkins, Pemberton and Gordon with 700 Manipuri troops and 800 coolies or porters marched through the Mao (Sopvoma) and Angami (Tengima) village-states from Imphal, the capital of Manipur to Nowgong in good weather to explore a suitable route for opening up direct communications between Assam and Manipur and to control the powerful Angami warriors. On their way, they were opposed by the Angamis with determined efforts at every village they passed through. The Nagas fired at them with their hand-made firearms, rolled down stones from the hill sides, threw spears and raised a strong yell of terror to intimidate the British force. In many instances, they set fire even to their own houses in order to destroy the provisions not allowing to fall into the hands of enemies. The British force retaliated.

¹ John Butler, *Rough Notes on the Angami Nagas* *J.A.S.B.*, 1875, V. 44, No. 4, pp. 307-27.

by constant firing of musketry to keep Nagas away at a far distance. For threat, the village-states were burnt, persons were killed and wounded. A stockade was also taken. In this way, they overcame the Naga opposition with considerable difficulties and continued with their journey. But the Nagas on the outskirts of Sibsagar and Lakhimpur were subdued easily.

Meanwhile, the Manipuri king, Gambhir Singh, it will be recalled, was nursing an ambition to expand his kingdom and achieve a permanent conquest over the Nagas who constituted a potential threat to his rule, with British help and he took quick steps of action. In 1833 he was allowed by the British to annex to Manipur the ranges of hills on the west, between the eastern and western bends of the Barak river, giving the state the line of the Jiri as its boundary on the condition that he removed all obstructions to trade between Manipur and Cachar, kept in repair the road between Manipur and British territory and promised to assist the British in the event of war with Burma. In the same year, accompanied by a Manipur levy larger in number than the previous force under Lt. Gordon, Gambhir Singh stormed and reduced the Naga village-states to temporary submission along the same old route i.e. Sengmae, Myungk-hang, Mooram Khoonoo, Moheloong, Yang, Papoo Longmai, Tiriamah, Samagudting, Dhunse reeviver, Mohong-dejoa and Ramsah. A stone sculptured with his footprints, covered with figures and dragon insignia was erected at Kohima upon a live boy who was buried as a symbol of conquest. This was contrary to the British policy and was considered to have constituted a threat to their vassal Purunder Singh's position whom the British were trying to establish on the throne of Assam. Yet it was decided not to prohibit him from subjugating the Nagas though he was forbidden to descend into the plains of Assam. In 1833, without full approval of the recommendation of Captain Jenkins to give Manipur all the hills lying between the Doyang and Dhansiri, the British company government came to suppose in a general kind of way that Manipur exercised some sort of authority over the southern portion of the Naga hills.¹

At the same time, the Governor-General and Supreme Council of Hindustan gave the conditions to which Manipuri king Gambhir Singh had accepted: "With regard to the two ranges of hills, the one called the Kāla Naga range, and the other called Nungjai range which are situated between the eastern and western bends of the

¹ See Mackenzie, A., *History of the Relations of the Government with the Hill Tribes of the North-East Frontier of Bengal*, Calcutta, 1884, pp. 101-2.

Barak, we give up all claim on the part of the Honourable Company thereunto, and we will make these hills over to the possession of the Raja, and give him the line of the Jiri and the western bend of the Barak as a boundary, provided that the Raja agrees to the whole of what is written in this paper, which is as follows:

"1. The Raja will agree to instructions received, without delay, remove his Thana from Chandrapur, and establish it on the Eastern bank of the Jiri.

"2. The Raja will in no way obstruct the trade carried on between the two countries by Bengalee and Manipuri merchants. He will not exact heavy duties and make a monopoly of no articles of merchandise whatsoever.

"3. The Raja will in no way prevent the Nagas inhabiting the Kala Naga and Nanjai ranges of hills, from selling or bartering ginger, cotton, pepper, and every other article, the produce of their country, in the plains of Cachar, at the Banskandi and Oodharbun bazars, as has been their custom.

"4. With regard to the road commencing from the Eastern bank of the Jiri and continuing via Kala Naga and Kowpoom as far as the valley of Manipur, after this road has been finished, the Raja will keep it in repairs, so as to enable laden bullocks to pass during the cold and dry seasons. Further, at the making of the road, if British officers be sent to examine or superintend the same, the Raja will agree to everything these officers may suggest.

"5. With reference to the intercourse already existing between the territories of the British government and those of the Raja, if the intercourse be further extended, it will be well in every respect, and it will be highly advantageous to both the Raja and his country. In order, therefore, that this may speedily take place, the Raja, at the requisition of the British government, will furnish a quota of Nagas to assist in the construction of the road.

"6. In the event of the war with the Burmese, if the troops be sent to Manipur either to protect that country or to advance to Ningthi, the Raja, at the requisition of the British government, will provide hill porters to assist in transporting ammunitions and baggage of such troops.

"7. In the event of anything happening on the Eastern frontier of the British territories, the Raja will, when required, assist the British government with a portion of his troops.

"8. The Raja will be answerable for all the ammunition he receives from the British government and will, for the information of the British government give in every month a statement of expendi-

ture to the British officer attached to the levy."¹

Thus the control of western Nagas had also fallen in the hands of Manipur. However, Manipur afterwards sank into the British background and no longer dreamt of exerting its supremacy upon the Nagas which it had formerly wielded.

On the other side, the annexation of Cachar into the British territory on 14 August 1832 and the emergence of Senapaty Tularam gave a better deal with the Nagas. To make their position safe, at the initial stage, the British government entrusted Manipur and Cachar to control the hostile Nagas since they were at least holding jurisdiction over some portions of the Naga village-states. In 1835 the border between Manipur and Assam was fixed at the forest between the Doyang and Dhansiri rivers. Persistent Naga raids and exactions continued increasingly on the borders of Manipur, Cachar and Assam which Nagas claimed as their territories as they did not recognise the arbitrary demarcation in the interests of Assam, Cachar, Manipur and the British. At the time of annexation of Cachar to British Indian territory after the death of its Raja, Govind Chunder leaving no successor either lineal or adopted, Senapaty Tularam was the principal chief in the North Cachar Hills. He was the son of Kacha Din, a table servant of a former Raja of Cachar and had later on attended on Govind Chunder also. Kacha Din revolted against the Raja after he was appointed to some office in the hills. The result was that he was enticed away by Govind Chunder in the plains and killed in a plan to suppress the uprising. Tularam became the chief of the hills and was able to hold it against the invasion of the Raja by the support given by the Burmese. In 1828 a determinate event unexpectedly struck his fortune. Tularam made over his levies to his cousin Govind Ram to foil an attempt by the Raja Govind Chunder to re-conquer the hills. Govind Ram defeated the advancing army of the Raja, but became treacherously ambitious, turned against Tularam and drove him into Jaintia. In 1829 Tularam assisted by the Manipuris expelled Govind Ram, who finally submitted to Raja Govind Chunder. In the meantime David Scott, the Governor-General's Agent in Assam intervened in this dispute and induced Govind Chunder to give Tularam a definite tract of the country bounded on the west by the Kopili, north by Bhategagra, south by Julinga and east by Samseyagram. This was given in order to maintain peace and order on the border. After Cachar was annexed, his territory was reduced in an area of

¹ Aitchison, *A Collection of Treaties, Engagements and Sanads*, V. XII, Calcutta, 1931, pp. 196-7.

about 2,224 sq. miles as a punishment for the murder of two British subjects by Tularam and a pension of Rs. 50 per mensem was granted to him. He was also given the duty of controlling the hostile Nagas along with the Manipuri king.

But Tularam reported his inability to the British government to check the Nagas while Manipur was carrying the measures of intumescence in a desultory way to hold sway over them by plundering the Naga village-states. This kind of atrocious acts rendered great hardship upon the Nagas. Nevertheless, though the British company government realised the impropriety of encouragement to Manipur to have exasperation and aggression against the Nagas, it was not prepared to take over the Naga states, but was inclined to regard Manipur as the *de facto* master of the hills. It persisted in calling Manipur to hold the Angami village-states and made a simultaneous effort to depute a detachment of sepoys under one British officer to stop any needless outrage by the Manipuri levies who received no pay but lived on the plunders of the Naga states they occupied. At last, proving a total failure, this policy of the British government was abandoned in 1837 in favour of repressive steps and slow acquisition of the Nagas.

Now pursuant of this policy, the Company government ordered a British officer to take up a post near the Naga hills and endeavour to bring the Naga chiefs to the friendly terms. A small Kachari levy also was raised and the whole tract of North Cachar was transferred to the Nowgong district of Assam from Dacca on 5 January 1839, where the officials could deal effectively with the Nagas. Ten military expeditions between 1835 and 1851 were conducted to the Naga village-states particularly against the Angamis whom the British considered to be cunning, treacherous, vindictive, blood-thirsty, revengeful, intelligent and exceedingly anxious for traffic and gain.

E. R. Grange, Sub-Assistant to the Commissioner of Nowgong was sent to the Angami village-states with a detachment of the 1st Sebundis, the 2nd Assam Light Infantry, 50 men of the Kachari levy and a party of Shan Police Militia to investigate the causes of yearly raids and incursions of the Angamis into Cachar for plunder and slave deals with the Bengalis and to punish the chiefs of the implicated Nagas for the raids of 5 January 1839, the same year the British government imposed opium war upon China when China refused to have trade and diplomatic relations with Britain after the unsuccessful British Mission of Lord Macartny in 1793. Seeing the friendly attitude of the chiefs of Khonoma and Mozema and insufficient force, Grange entered into an agreement with the Mozema

chief, Ikkari, a perfect savage, wild, suspicious, wearing a collar with hair of his enemies' scalps, not to molest the Kacharis by holding opposite ends of a spear and being cut into two, as an act of ratification in the Naga fashion. Thus, the Grange force returned safely though some attempts to attack their camp at night were made on 3 December 1839.

Again, Grange along with the Shan detachment was deputed to visit the Angami village-states. A party from Manipur also joined his expedition. The force entered the village-states via Samagudting on 24 January 1840. At the sight of the Manipuris accompanying Grange, the Nagas had anticipated with suspicion that Manipuris had been brought to harass them, and they immediately surprised him with an attack but he beat them back, set five village-states ablaze and took eleven Nagas as prisoners. The expedition thus ended in hostility. Soon after this, two Naga chiefs of Samagudting came down and entered into a friendly agreement with him; as a result, the Naga prisoners were released and lands east of Mohung Dijoa were given to them.

Another British visitor was Captain Brodie who was then in-charge of the area during the winter season of 1841-42. Capt. Brodie was ordered to visit the Naga hills with the object of taking measures for the prevention of frequent marauding attacks of the Nagas in the plains of Assam, Cachar and Manipur and to put an end to the system of exterminating warfare. He passed through the Naga hills in between the gorge of the Dikhu and Bora Dehing rivers, met the different tribal chiefs and induced them to abstain from outrages in the plains, refraining from hostilities among themselves and from the practice of exporting Naga children as slaves to the British territory.

On 26 November 1840 Lt. Brigge, Principal Assistant to the Agent of the Governor-General with a detachment of the 1st Assam Light Infantry left Nowgong and entered the Angami village-states to make a complete tour on the 22 January 1841. He received cordial welcome from the Angamis and concluded an agreement according to which Dhansiri was fixed as the boundary between the British district and the Angami hill tract; an exchange of friendly visits from time to time was promised mainly in view to the suppression of the slave traffic carried on between the Nagas and the Bengalis in Sylhet; the settlement of boundary between the Angami states and Manipur was made and which practically remained unsettled until 1877; a nominal tribute was to be taken from the Nagas, beginning in an appropriate time; a road was to be opened to Samagudting

from the plains and a salt deposit was to be opened at Dimapur. Thus, Brigge's expedition signalled a show of peace, goodwill and understanding, although things later on worked out differently under force of circumstances. Consequently, for one or two years, a large number of the Naga states were very peaceful. They came down to the established post, made compromise of their old quarrels in the presence of British officers, and promised to obey the Government and pay yearly tribute. But they still continued their occasional raids in Cachar and Manipur.

Lt. Brigge again marched across the hills in the winter of 1841-42. However, it was decided in a conference between Lt. Brigge and Captain Gordon, Political Agent of Manipur that "commencing from the upper part of the Jiri river, the western frontier of Manipur, the line of boundary formed (1) by the Dotighur mountain, or that range of hills in which the Mukro river takes its rise, east on the Barak river; (2) by the Barak river upto where it is joined by the 'Tayphani river, which flows along the eastern line of the Popolongmai hill; (3) by the 'Tayphani river up to its source on the Burrail range of mountains; and (4) by the summit or water-pent of the Burrail range on to the source of the Mow river flowing north from that point towards Assam was the best boundary between Manipur and the Angami country: First, because the Angami Nagas and all the inferior tribes subject to their influence occupy the mountainous part north of the boundary here given, and have together been the perpetrators of all the acts of aggression which have been committed of late years both in Cachar and Manipur. Secondly, because along the western portion of the boundary here proposed, the whole of the villages south of it, which were before near this frontier, having been from time to time destroyed by the tribes from the north, and their inhabitants obliged for protection to locate themselves further south, a considerable tract of mountainous country in this direction is completely deserted. Thirdly, because along the portion of the boundary here proposed to the east of Popolongmai the Angami tribes are separated from the Nagas of Manipur by a lofty range of mountains, across which little, if any, communication takes place. Fourthly, because the Manipur government not having at present any control or authority over the villages to the north, and the Angamis not possessing any influence over those to the south of this proposed boundary throughout its whole extent, its adoption would not disjoin connected tribes or separate any village from a jurisdiction to which it has been long attached, as would be the case where any portion of the country north of the line suggested made over to the Manipur

government."

Again, in 1842 the Political Agent (of Assam) claimed: "Captain Brodie has nearly succeeded in bringing the whole of those (Nagas) residing within our boundary into submission to our Government, and besides stopping their inroads and attacks upon our villages, which was the immediate object of our interfering with them, he has in great measure prevailed on them to forgo their constant murderous wars upon each other, and brought the whole population of the subject tribes—not certainly less than 200,000 into peaceful communication with Assam as traders with our ryots."

In April 1844 the Company government from Nowgong sent an Assistant to collect the first yearly payment of tribute, but the Angami chiefs defied the government order and refused to pay it. Moreover, the Nagas staged a daring murderous raid in which three Shan Police Militia soldiers were killed in Lunkae in the North Cachar on October 3. The Government decided to take more effective measures in dealing with the Nagas and sent a strong force of 59 men led by the Captain Eld, Principal Assistant and Sub-Assistant Wood of the 2nd Assam Light Infantry on December 10, with the express object of punishing the Naga murderers of the soldiers. When they reached the implicated Naga state, they found that the people had already fled away to the nearby friendly village-states and their village was razed to the ground. In the same year, the Government came to know that the Manipuri troops had helped one Naga clan to attack against another and found that it seemed impossible to get Manipur follow the orders of the Government. The Government discussed again to conquer the Naga village-states once for all but adopted only a middle course.

On 28 November 1845 an expedition led by Captain Butler, Principal Assistant of Nowgong with a detachment of 100 men commanded by Lt. Campbell and a Survey Officer, Thornton visited the Angami village-states and the Northern Cachar. Conciliating the Nagas and mapping the topography of the Naga states and surveying the route which hitherto had not been properly mapped and followed, they made a peaceful march through the states. Everywhere they were accorded big welcome with presents of ivory, clothes and spears. This successful expedition rendered inevitably the accurate map and knowledge of the Naga states, was considered to be of a great importance for the future. But as soon as Capt. Butler left the hills, the Nagas poured raids in the plains. The Governor-General's Agent, in spite of Butler's report to have a strong permanent post in the Naga hills, preferred an annual expedition to dissuade the Nagas

from raiding their neighbours.

Between 30 November 1846 and 17 January 1847 Captain Butler accompanied by the Sub-Assistant Commissioner, Masters and a detachment of one Subedar, 3 havildars, 3 naiks and 49 soldiers of the Assam Light Infantry again visited the Angami village-states through Dimapur, in spite of futile attempt made by some Nagas to attack them and he had agreements, presents and oaths to discontinue predatory raids and to become British subjects. One good result that followed Butler's tour was that a new stockade and grain godowns were built at Dimapur; a market was established at Samagudting; a road was opened from Mohung Dijooa to Samagudting; a detachment of Shan Police Militia was stationed there permanently in charge of Bhogchand, a brave native Assamese as Sazowal superintendent of the Angamis with the authority over the whole Angami states. But Bhogchand was killed because of his direct interference in the dangerous internecine feuds of the Nagas.

It is quite interesting to know how Bhogchand met his ill-fate under the mysterious circumstances in April 1849. The two Angami chiefs namely Jubelee and Nilholy of the Mozema state quarrelled over a piece of land. Both the parties were irreconcilable in dispute, Jubelee requested that a guard of sepoy should be posted in the village. Both the chiefs called on the Agent to the Governor-General at Gauhati, returned to their village and sought the helpers to fight for them whenever necessary. Jubelee secured the favour of Kacharis sent by bad-character Haridas, a constable of Manipur government while Nilholy was supported by the Khonoma people. One of the Jubelee's men was killed on April 1849. Haridas urged Bhogchand to hear and settle the case immediately. On Bhogchand's arrival there, the two chiefs were called out and ordered to build the stockade for the new post. Bhogchand then insisted on Nilholy's pointing out those of his followers who killed Jubelee's man, and when they were pointed out, he at once arrested them. Nilholy got enraged and left the village to revenge by any possible means at hand. Trying to be strictly impartial, Bhogchand also arrested seven Kacharis of Jubelee's party, disarmed them, and prepared to escort them to Samagudting. But, surprisingly enough, both the feuding parties, Nilholy's and Jubelee's, unitedly attacked Bhogchand as a common enemy at Phophema where he had encamped and speared him to death brutally.

After this treacherous murder of Bhogchand, the Government was urged by the Governor-General's Agent to deal firmly with the Nagas. But the Government was not very much anxious to add the

barren Naga village-states to the British-India except taking some retributory steps that will be seen from orders of Government:

"The President in Council has learnt with much regret the failure of the endeavours which have so long and perseveringly been made to induce the Naga tribes to live quietly and peaceably, as evidenced by the deadly feuds reported still to exist among themselves, and by the recent acts of atrocity committed by some of them upon officers and subjects of our Government. His Honour in Council is so strongly impressed with a conviction of absolute necessity which exists for the adoption of the most stringent and decisive measures in regard to these barbarous tribes, in order to deter them from a repetition of these outrages upon our people, that he is willing to leave a very wide discretion in your (Captain Jenkins') hands as to the steps to be taken during the approaching cold season.

"The Government of India has certainly been always most averse to resort to such extreme measures, as burning villages, destroying crops, granaries, and the like; and as respects these Naga tribes in particular, very great forbearance has been shown. For some years a policy, entirely conciliatory in its character, has been adopted towards them; unceasing efforts have been made to induce them to live on terms of amity with each other, and to refrain from committing those horrible acts of cruelty to which they were known to be addicted. These efforts, however, seem unhappily to have been quite unproductive of any good result; and the recent murder of one of our police officers in the execution of his duty, followed up as it has been by a deliberate attack of one of our frontier posts, in which two police sepoys have been killed, has rendered it imperatively necessary, in the opinion of the President in Council, that immediate and severe measures should be resorted to, in order to convince the tribes that such acts of outrages cannot be committed with impunity. His Honour in Council desires, however, that the officer who may be entrusted with the execution of such measures during the next few months should receive from yourself specific instructions for his guidance. The discretion which the Government is willing to place in your hands should not be delegated by you to others except on very emergent grounds. As far as it may be possible so to arrange, no village should be burnt, nor the crops of any village destroyed, except those which you may yourself point out to be so dealt with, in the event of a non-compliance by the clans to whom they belong with the demands which you may consider it necessary to make upon them for the surrender of those who are known to have been concerned in the recent attacks upon our subjects."

The Junior Assistant Commissioner, Lieutenant Vincent led two military expeditions to avenge Bhogchand's death, one in November 1849 and the other in March 1850. The first was not so successful. In the second expedition, Lt. Vincent re-captured Mozema where he set up a stockade and burnt down some part of Khonoma state. Facing the outrages of the Nagas, he stayed there the whole of the summer season. At last he called for assistance from Major Jenkins in the plains. Vincent discovered this also that in every Angami states, there were parties, one attached to the interest of Manipur and the other to that of the British, each working against the other. Knowing the involvement of Manipur with the Nagas, the Company government warned Manipur to refrain from such activities. For the complete suppression of the Nagas and its allies, a British force of over 500 men, with three pounder guns and two mortars and officers were stationed there. But after capturing a strong Naga fort at Khonoma, the British troops and the Nagas fought a bloody battle at Kekrima, even to the extent of a hand to hand fight in December. In this battle, more than three hundred Nagas were killed and many on the British side also. Nevertheless, this battle was a turning point in the policy of the British towards the Nagas. The Commissioner of Assam urged that, while withdrawing the troops from the Naga hills without detriment to military vantage, the post at Mozema should be retained for one year on experimental basis for the safety of the clans friendly to the British till Manipur's secret aid to the hostile Nagas was rigorously restrained. But Captain Butler, the Principal Assistant at Nowgong recommended complete withdrawal of the British force from the Naga hills, stoppage of unnecessary interference in the internal feuds and affairs of the Nagas forever and giving up the idea of conquering them. On the other hand, the British had an axe to grind in the raids of the Kukis in the Naga states and in the valley of Manipur in the wake of the successive drives of the Kukis by the Lushais and Suktes since the British had to protect Manipur.

Lord Dalhousie (1848-56) succeeded Lord Hardinge as the Governor-General. A young, proud, intelligent but ambitious, he was confronted by many problems handed over by his predecessors. On the north-western frontiers, the Sikhs abetted by the Afghans revolted against the Government in 1848. Yet, after several engagements, the brave Sikhs were defeated, the Afghan allies driven off and the Punjab annexed in pursuance of his policy of the 'Doctrine of Lapse'. At the same time, on the north-eastern India Naga raids continued almost unabated because the British campaigns of

conquest could not so far overcome the Naga warriors born and reared in rough mountains, with the high morale derived from their identification with animism and the confidence bred of the successful guerrilla fighting. On seeing the imminent threat from the Burmese than the Nagas, and in view of the recommendations of the officers in Assam, he decided to duck awhile by maintaining a policy of absolute non-interference in the Naga affairs and ordered the British force to withdraw from the Naga states in 1851. He also more emphatically pronounced the game not worth the candle by annexing a savage people and their virtually inaccessible barren mountains to add to their responsibilities. He writes as follows:

"I concur in the conclusion to which the Hon'ble President in Council has come respecting the relations to be maintained with the Angami Nagas, and consider that His Honour has judged wisely in directing the withdrawal of the force which has been sent, and of the post which has been established in advance in that country.

"I dissent entirely from the policy which is recommended of what is called obtaining a control, that is to say, of taking possession of these hills, and of establishing our sovereignty over their savage inhabitants. Our possession could bring no profit to us, and would be as costly to us as it would be unproductive. The only advantage which is expected from our having possession of the country by those who advocate the measure is the termination of the plundering inroads which the tribes now make from the hills on our subjects at the foot of them. But this advantage may more easily, more cheaply, and more justly be obtained by refraining from all seizure of the territory of these Nagas, and by confining ourselves to the establishment of effective means of defence on the line of our own frontier. I cannot, for a moment, admit that the establishment of such a line of frontier defence is impracticable. Major Jenkins describes the troops who compose the Militia as these, there can be no impossibility, nor even difficulty in establishing effective lines of frontier defence, if the plan is formed by officers of capacity, and executed by officers of spirit and judgment. This opinion is not given at random. The peace and security preserved on other portions of the frontier of this Empire, where the extent is greater and the neighbouring tribes far more formidable, corroborate the opinion I have given. As it is impolitic to contemplate the permanent possession of these hills, so it seems to me impolitic to sanction a temporary occupation of them. We have given our aid to the friendly tribes and replaced them in their villages. We have destroyed the military works and have 'broken and dispirited' their enemies. I can see, therefore,

no injustice or impropriety in leaving that tribe to maintain the ground which is now its own.

"Our withdrawal now, under the circumstances above-described, when our power has been vindicated, our enemies dispersed, and our friends re-established, can be liable to no misrepresentation, and can be attributed to no motive but the real one, namely, our desire to show that we have no wish for territorial aggrandisement, and no designs on the independence of the Naga tribes. And as there is, in my judgment, no good reason against our withdrawing, so there are good reasons why we should withdraw. The position of the European officer and of the troops during last season appeared to me far from satisfactory, I should be very reluctant to continue that state of things in another season. The troops so placed are isolated; they are dependent, as appears from Major Jenkins' letter to Lieutenant Vincent, on the Naga tribes for their food, and for the carriage of supplies of every description; while Major Jenkins evidently has no great confidence that even the friendly tribes, for which we are doing all this, can be relied upon securely for supplying the food of the force which is fighting its battles. For these reasons I think that the advanced post should be withdrawn now, at the time of our success, and when we have executed all we threatened. Hereafter we should confine ourselves to our own ground; protect it as it can and must be protected; not meddle in the feuds or fights of these savages; encourage trade with them as long as they are peaceful toward us; and rigidly exclude them from all communication either to sell what they have got, or to buy what they want if they should become turbulent or troublesome. These are the measures which are calculated to allay their natural fears of our aggression upon them and then to repel their aggression on our people. These will make them feel our power both to repel their attacks and to exclude them from advantages they desire, far better, at less cost, and with more justice, than by annexing their country openly by a declaration, or virtually by a partial occupation.

"With respect to the share the State of Manipur has borne in these transactions, I must observe that the reasoning by which Major Jenkins is led to assume that Manipur has been abetting the Nagas is loose in the extreme. If, however, better proof of the fact be shown, and the complicity of Manipur either recently or hereafter shall be satisfactorily established, there can be no difficulty in dealing with it. In such case it would be expedient to remind the Rajah of Manipur that the existence of his state depends on a word from the Government of India; that it will not suffer his subjects,

either openly or secretly, to aid and abet the designs of the enemies of this Government; and that if he does not at once control his subjects and prevent their recurrence to any unfriendly acts, the word on which the existence of his state depends will be spoken, and its existence will be put an end to.

"The increase of police which is asked should be granted, and Major Jenkins should be desired to submit his scheme of frontier posts when it is prepared, together with a map showing its disposition. In conclusion I would observe that I have seen nothing in these papers to change the unfavourable opinion I expressed of the conduct of affairs relative to the Angami Nagas, as it appeared in the documents previously transmitted to me."

This decision of Lord Dalhousie was arrived partly because of the difficulties of unsurmountable terrain and impenetrable forests infested with various diseases, partly because of bad weather and landslides, partly because of the hostility of the Nagas and partly because of not seeing profit in the broader economic enterprise of the empire.

THE INDECISIVE YEARS OF CONQUEST

Not even had one year passed after the withdrawal of the British force from the Naga hills in 1851, when twenty-two Naga raids and uprisings were witnessed in which 55 persons were killed, 10 wounded and 113 taken captives. On the other side, the Bhutanese raided Bengal Duar a number of times between 1837 and 1864. As such the British policy of non-interference was at a serious trial of its life and death. "Fate seems determined to prove that there shall be no rest for the English in India till they stand forth as the governors or advisers of each tribe and people, in the land."¹ But from 1857 to 1871 the Bengal government obstinately refused to listen to the constant demands of the local officers that such non-interference was impossible so long as the Nagas passed through the British territory and no efficient outposts were kept. Ultimately the enduring policy and action towards the tribes became clear when Disraeli came into power in England in 1870s and advocated a powerful policy of British imperialism wherever and whenever it was possible on the entire globe. Lord Lytton, the new Governor-General of India, putting his own plans to protect the Empire against Russian manoeuvres in Afghanistan had urged the Secretary of State to get effective control not at prohibitive cost

¹ For Mackenzie's observation, see his *Memorandum on the North-east Frontier of Bengal*, Calcutta, 1869, p. 69.

over the hill tribes of Assam and the Upper Burma in order to protect the lives and properties of the British subjects in the plains and to extend the establishment of political control and influence throughout the entire frontier areas without any actual assertion of Government at every possible direction. Such a crucial step of the British government came indirectly for economic profit in the discovery of native tea plant of the area, open seams of coal and the presence of oil and other minerals in Assam plains and surrounding hills.

But in the early 1850s the British knew more definitely that Burma had become a bigger trouble-centre than the Nagas after few years of the First Anglo-Burmese War had elapsed. In this war, the British had extracted some limited concessions which the Burmese refused to live up to. As a result, the Second Anglo-Burmese War broke out in 1852 in which the Burmese were defeated and Lord Dalhousie, the Governor-General of India declared unilateral annexation of Burma when the Burmese king stubbornly refused to negotiate with the British at their terms. Yet, the Upper Burma remained as independent small kingdoms.

In 1853 the North Cachar tract held by Tularam's sons was annexed to Assam and a European officer was appointed in charge of it to protect against the Naga raids, at the instance of Lord Dalhousie's shifting opinion that occupation of the Naga states had better prospects than the policy of absolute non-interference or *laissez faire* which he had advocated earlier (say from 1840-50). In 1854 an awkward situation arose as a result of which the Nagas, relations with the British went under a shade: A Manipuri force attacked the Angami village-states. Immediately, twenty-two villages sent their deputies to the Government for protection and intervention in their favour. But the Government refused to intervene on the plea that this area was not considered to form an integral part of the British India, but neither was it considered to be part of any other British political entity, so as the Nagas could not be protected. However, an officer was posted to Asalu and a line of frontier posts was set up on a vague, undefined authority to check the Naga raids. The Government also settled many Kukis in the neighbourhood of Langting in 1855 in order to act as a barrier for the North Cachar against the Angami raids under the inducement of Colonel McCulloch's policy of settling the Kukis on the exposed frontiers of Manipur. Despite these measures, at least 19 raids were committed by the Angamis between 1854 and 1865 as and when they chose, in which 233 people were killed, wounded and captured.

The spark-off of the war of Indian independence in 1857 and the subsequent replacement of the East India Company's regime by the British Crown government in India necessitated to review afresh the whole gamut of relations between the British and the Nagas. Even up to this time the policy of non-interference pursued by the Government became despairingly irksome and the raids went on till 1862 when the Commissioner of Assam felt constrained to report: "It is not creditable to our Government that such atrocities should recur annually with unvarying certainty, and that we should be powerless alike to protect our subjects or to punish the aggressors. It is quite certain that our relations with the Nagas could not possibly be on a worse footing than they are now. The non-interference policy is excellent in theory, but Government will probably be inclined to think that it must be abandoned." Still the worst of all was that Assam was included into Bengal. As such it took quite some time for the Government to devise a perfect concept and ways to deal the Nagas in the "country void of roads, void of supplies, ... of interminable hills, of vast swamp covered with dense forest, save where here and there a speck in the ocean of wilderness reveals a miserable Mikir or Kachari cleavage, could not possibly be defended at every point against a foe for whom hill and swamp and forest are resources rather than obstacles." Keeping of peace and order continued to depend on the previous well-tried means as posting of forces at strategic locations in the foothills, barring the access of recalcitrant groups to the plains and sending military expeditions.

Sir Cecil Beacon, Secretary to the Government of Bengal became the Lieutenant-Governor in 1862. First of all, he disagreed with his predecessors over the previous policy of intercepting the Nagas from trade—which was pursued particularly by Sir John Peter Grant, (Lieutenant-Governor 1859-62) because he thought it was not only unsound in itself, but impossible to put into practice in a situation like that created by the Angamis. Still believing in his previous oriental theory of government enunciated on behalf of the Governor implying the uniformity of administration, he directed that an officer subordinate to the Deputy Commissioner of Nowgong should be posted in the Naga states to open dialogue with them without interfering in their internal affairs except only when any disputes voluntarily referred by Nagas themselves to him. At the same time, in 1862 he proposed a controversial policy which stated that, "we might abandon North Cachar and all the hill tracts inhabited by Nagas, and strictly enforce the non-interference policy of 1851-52. We might advance into the hills, place special officers in charge, and

maintain them there by force of arms. We might while confining ourselves to the plains, cultivate political relations with the neighbouring clans and bring their chiefs into stipendiary police relations to ourselves."

For the next three years until 1866, the situation remained fluid as no one was clear about the line of policy to be adopted when the Angamis' raids on the North Cachar became too frequent and beyond the control of Lt. Gregory. The Commissioner of Assam appraised the Lieutenant-Governor of Gregory's difficulties in North Cachar and asked for decisive orders to deal with the insurgent Nagas. Sir Cecil Beaton now resolved to take direct control of the Nagas and curb them by all means. He wrote to the Government of India to this effect, stating: "In regard to the policy to be pursued towards the Angami Nagas, the Lieutenant-Governor is clearly of opinion that the abandonment of the position we held previously to 1854, and the withdrawal of our line of frontier posts to the left bank of the Dhansiri is proved, by the events which have since occurred to have been a grave mistake, and that the only course left us consistent with the duty we owe to the inhabitants of the adjoining frontier districts as well as to the Angami Nagas themselves, who are torn by internecine feuds for want of a government, and unable to exercise any general self-control, or to restrain independent action on the part of any village or even of a section of any of the numerous villages inhabited by the tribe, is to reassert our authority over them, and bring them under a system of administration suited to their circumstances, and gradually to reclaim them from habits of lawlessness to those of order and civilization.

"The Angami Nagas are frequently mentioned in the correspondence of later years as independent Nagas, and a distinction is made between the tract they inhabit and the British territory, as if the former were not included in the latter. But for this distinction there is no real ground. The treaties with Burma and Manipur recognise the Patkai and Burrail ranges of hills running in a continuous line from the sources of the Dihing in the extreme east of Assam to those of the Dhansiri in North Cachar as the boundary between those countries and British India. There is no intermediate independent territory, and while the wild tribes who inhabit the southern slopes of those ranges are subject to Burma and Manipur; those who inhabit the northern slopes are subject to the British government. These latter, including the Angami Nagas, are independent only in the sense that the British government has refrained from reducing them to practical subjection, and left them, except at occasional intervals,

entirely to themselves; but they have never enjoyed or acquired political or territorial independence; and it is clearly open to the British government in point of right, as it is incumbent on it in good policy, to exercise its sovereign power by giving them the benefit of a settled administration.

"This is the course advocated by all the local authorities and it is the one which the Lieutenant Governor strongly recommends as the only means of establishing peace in this part of the frontier, and of putting an end to the atrocities which have prevailed more or less for the last thirty years, and which a policy of non-interference and purely defensive action is now found to be wholly inadequate to prevent. Even if the right of the British government were less clear than it is, the existence on its border of a savage and turbulent tribe, unable to restrain its members from the commission of outrage given up to anarchy, and existing only as a pest and nuisance to its neighbours, would justify the Government in the adoption of any measures for bringing it under subjection and control."

In the same year, the Government of India issued orders which indicated that the measures were to be taken in a cautious manner, giving the economic motives greater weight than the ostensible mission of civilising the Nagas. The order points out: "With reference to various passages of your letter under reply, indicating a desire to bring the whole country of the Angami Nagas at once under the subjection of the British government, I am desired to observe that such a policy is more than the local officers recommend, or the Government of India is prepared to sanction. Colonel Hopkinson appears to agree entirely in Lieutenant Gregory's proposal, and the only instance in which the latter officer contemplates any assertion of actual authority over the Nagas is that of the villagers of Samagudting who are said to have been always friendly to us, and to be really anxious for our re-occupation of their territory. Lieutenant Gregory's object is from his position at Samagudting and by the exhibition to the other Nagas of the kindly relations subsisting between the Samagudting people and himself, gradually to win the confidence and friendship of the neighbouring villages and so, village by village, to bring the whole Naga country under control, but he deprecates strongly any attempt to do this by force, he is 'totally averse to any attempt to subdue the country'. This, I am to intimate, is policy which commends itself to the approval of the Governor-General in Council.

"Lieutenant Gregory may take up the proposed position at Samagudting, and do his best by tact and good management, supported

by a moderate display of physical force, to bring that portion of the hill tract adjacent to the plains into order. He will remember that our main object in having any dealings with the hill people is to protect the low lands from their incursions. Instead therefore, of exerting himself to extend our rule into the interior, he will rather refrain from such a course. Subject to this general principle, his line of action may advantageously be left in great measure to his own good judgment. A conciliatory demeanour will of course be indispensable, and perhaps the expenditure of a little money to leading men will be useful. When conciliation fails, punitive measures will not be shrunk from. In some instances a blockade of the passes, so as to exclude the offending tribe or village from our bazars, may be attended with good results. But in all cases the great point will be to select a penalty suitable to the circumstances of the particular affair. Where roads are necessary, they must be constructed in a simple and inexpensive manner, just sufficient for the opening of the country to the extent actually required.

“Should the plan thus sketched succeed, and the hillmen be gradually reclaimed to our rule and civilized without much cost to the British Treasury in the process, it will be a good work well accomplished. But His Excellency in Council cannot admit that we are bound to attempt more in their behalf than the resources of the empire can reasonably afford.”

In 1866 the Naga Hills district was formed with its headquarters at Samagudting, whose administrative jurisdiction covered the Angami village-states and the watershed of the Doyang. Asalu in North Cachar was abandoned, though a small police guard was posted there. The new district did not include some forested areas of the Nagas which were tagged with Sibsagar and Nowgong districts, the Naga hills of Manipur and North Cachar and Mikir hills whereas the Naga area of north-eastern frontier and Burma were not explored even so far. Yet the Government viewed that the carving of the district was purely for administrative necessity in order to bring the turbulent Nagas into check and to protect the plains people from Naga raids which occurred for many years; however, divide and rule policy was put into operation at the bottom and pushed its political boundary step by step to the hills. Gregory was appointed as the Deputy Commissioner of the Naga Hills district under the direct orders of the Commissioner. As an administrative change, he had no longer to take orders from Nowgong district. The new headquarters was connected with Dimapur by road. A compact force comprising 150 policemen, mostly hillmen, was

placed at the Deputy Commissioner's disposal. Discretionary powers were also given to him so as to enable him to deal with cases of grave outrage on the spot. An elementary judicial system was also introduced. Interpreters and messengers were appointed in important villages. A school and a dispensary were opened to provide rudimentary Educational and medical facilities. The retaliatory measures given to the Manipuris against the Naga raids were removed. Steps to redress the damages caused by the outrages committed by Angamis were taken in consultation with Gregory. Trade was encouraged; blockades as a pressure to bear on the offending village-states were left; and the Nagas began to visit the markets in the plains of Assam with the passes furnished by the Deputy Commissioner. At the same time, an order was issued that the Nagas were not to enter Assam with arms and they were required to leave all their weapons at the guard-house.

A few years later it was stated in an official report, that "the name of Angami, once a terror to the peasantry of Nowgong and Golaghat and an abhorrence to civil officers, promises soon to designate as peaceful and industrious a people as any we have dealings with". The annual raids of the Nagas upon their neighbours had stopped to a hopeful extent. Yet the Naga problem still remained to be solved entirely. In January of the same year (1866) of the inauguration of the Naga Hills district, the Razepeema Nagas cut up a Mikir village in North Cachar. Lt. Gregory made a dash with a police force and burnt the Razepeema village-state in March. The Razepeemas took a retaliatory step and butchered twenty-six Kukis in a raid of their village. Lt. Gregory punished them again by levelling their village to the ground in order to receive their complete submission to the Government. In 1867 the Nagas attacked the Galliki guard-house and killed some of the garrison and shortly afterwards an Assamese village was also attacked. As its result, the passes were closed and the outposts strengthened.

In 1869 Captain Butler took charge of the Naga Hills district from Gregory as Deputy Commissioner whose title was changed to that of Political Agent in 1872 with more powers. He at once decided to bring the refractory Nagas to order and peace and to consolidate the British rule in the Naga Hills by interfering with tribal disputes and by entering freely to the Naga village-states. When the Nagas staged raids upon the Manipuris in March 1871, the Captain offered himself to assume the direct authority with the Nagas, urging upon the Government to adopt a bolder policy as employed in the Khasi Hills some forty years ago, before fomenting disturbances

along the sensitive borders at the intrigues of some revolutionary Manipuris to the Nagas against the Government.

So the immediate task of Captain Butler was to resolve the fresh complications that had arisen between the Naga Hills and Manipur on the question of the demarcation of boundary. We have seen that the boundary laid down in 1842 had been reasserted in 1867 by the Government in order to prevent Manipur from making retaliatory raids on the limits of the Naga Hills to which Manipur objected as plundering Naga villages that had paid tribute to it for years. On the other hand, the Nagas felt no scruples in violating the boundary as they maintained that it had arbitrarily been drawn by the British, keeping the interest of Manipur vital in their mind than that of the Nagas. Moreover the British officers were not authorised by the Supreme Government to have direct control over the independent Nagas within the limits of the Naga Hills. Nevertheless, the Government of India concurred in this view, holding that since the British decided to avoid encroachment upon the Naga village-states, Manipur also should be restricted to the limits laid down by Gordon and Brigge in 1841-42.

In the meantime, the Naga Hills administration made some progress in the survey operations in the Naga village-states in spite of the difficulties of procuring supplies and transport and pointing out the advantage of finally demarcating the boundary between the Naga Hills and Manipur. Sir W. Grey, the Lieutenant Governor of Bengal, hesitating to push on the regular survey operations at that delicate phase agreed at last to the settlement of boundary question.

In the winter of 1869-70 Captain Butler, the Deputy Commissioner of Naga Hills and Dr. Brown, the Political Agent of Manipur met to demarcate the boundary line. In accordance with their decision, a Boundary Commissioner was appointed who had visited all disputed points and the boundary was eventually settled in July 1872, without the consent and even the knowledge of the concerned Nagas. In this, the Gordon-Brigge Line of 1842 was maintained in all important points except demarcating the unidentified portions. A few villages situated on the dividing ridge of the waterpoint, which Manipur claimed as belonging to it, were awarded to it; and from the termination of the line of 1842, at a point called the Telizo peak, eastward the watershed of the mainline of hills which divide the affluents of the Brahmaputra from those of the Irrawaddy as far as the Patkoi pass was declared to be the limit of Manipur on its northern frontier. The jurisdiction of the Naga Hills district extended to the boundary of Manipur thus determined. The Kuki colonies on the Langting

were brought within the limits of the Naga Hills district as a measure rendered necessary by their having commenced a course of active hostilities against certain Naga villages. Manipur afterwards objected to the boundary, but its objections were overruled.

After serious deliberations over the problem, the Lieutenant-Governor of Bengal, Sir George Campbell (1871-74) recommended his plans of dealing with the Nagas. He opined that since the direct assertion of rule was not in immediate interest of the Government, the gradual establishment of political control should be proceeded by introducing a sort of political police authority with arbitration between the feud-engulfed Nagas; the Political Agent should be removed to a central place where he could be able to keep peace and order in the Naga country by virtue of his influence and to a certain extent, by the display of arms. He also recommended that extensive explorations should eventually be carried out with greater speed so that the borders of British rule could be extended. The Supreme Government willingly accepted his proposals, though it was not prepared yet to assert direct administration of the Naga Hills for quite a number of reasons. A step further, the Naga Hills district which was until now, under the jurisdiction of the Lieutenant-Governor of Bengal was transferred to the Chief Commissioner of Assam. The direct administration was entrusted to the District Commissioner. Assam also was separated from Bengal to facilitate its governance and formed a province under a Chief Commissioner in February 1874 as the state of Bengal was too unwieldy. The administration of Assam was regulated by a number of acts, and the most important of which was the Scheduled Districts Act of 1874 which had made special provision for under-developed tracts. The Act also empowered the Government to notify what laws should be enforced on them. Even in the Naga Hills situation at this time was seemingly freezing into normalcy. The weaker Naga villages began to themselves seek the protection of the British government from the raids of the more powerful villages. The manifestations of hostility against the Government seemed to have ceased partly. But in fact, the conditions were not completely ripe for peace in the Naga Hills.

On the other hand, a great economic revolution had been markedly taking place in the Assam plains symbolised by the tea plantations. We know that in the early 17th century, tea as a drink restricted only to the aristocratic classes in India, was imported from China. For a commercial enterprise, the East India Company decided to examine the possibility of tea cultivation in India. In due process, Captain Jenkins discovered the indigenous tea shrub exactly like

that of Chinese plant growing wildly in the forests throughout the hills inhabited by the aboriginal people of Assam. Then the Assam Tea Company was formed in 1839 with C.A. Bruce as its Superintendent. Soon, other tea planters also joined the fray and the trade started flourishing. Further exploration engendered to the discovery of coal and oil in the jungles around the tea plantations. By 1850, the steamers were brought in to ply up and down the Brahmaputra and before long the European traders and tea planters established townships and well-built clubs.

By 1870 the British subjects were steadily expanding their tea plantation industries in the hill forests between the Naga hills and Assam. This trespass of the borders of the Nagas aroused great indignation and resentment against the British. They used to slaughter the intruders at opportune time and caused great alarm among the proprietors of the tea gardens. Even the payment of the land revenue in some cases to the Naga chiefs did not solve the problem. Disputes and disturbances between the tea planters and the Nagas and other tribes continued frequently. At last, in order to settle the matter, the Government passed the Inner Line Regulation in 1873¹ under which the Lieutenant-Governor of Assam was empowered to establish an inner Line according to which no British subjects or specified classes or foreign residents could go beyond a certain frontier that was drawn along the foothills of the northern, eastern and south-eastern borders of the Brahmaputra valley, inhabited by the hill tribes, without a pass or licence issued by the Deputy Commissioner. The trouble still hung as it was not easy to define the actual boundary of the British possessions, as the so-called Inner Line did not necessarily indicate in no sense the territorial frontiers, but merely marked the limits of the area administered by the British from "unadministered areas" of Assam, being prescribed only for the limited purpose of regulating entry of the people to certain areas. It did in no way decide the crucial question of the sovereignty of the territory beyond the limits of the British-administered area. As such, the Inner Line Regulation was laid down along the borders of the Brahmaputra valley. Even before an Inner Line existed on the Lushai marshes, it had fallen into desuetude after the British had occupied the Lushai Hills. Tea planters were not allowed to acquire land beyond the Inner Line either from the Assam government or from the local tribal chiefs.

The Inner Line Regulation was the first law promulgated in Assam under the authority conferred by the Statutes 33 Vict., Chapter 3,

¹ It was revised and extended in 1884, 1928, 1929, and 1934 and by the Government of India in 1959.

which had given to the Government of India power of summary legislation for backward tracts. Such laws were called Regulation as to distinguish them from the acts or laws passed by the legislature. Unfortunately the Line drawn was neglected and brought the unrestricted intercourse between the plains men in Assam and the Naga tribes and other different tribes in the hills which often led to quarrels and disorder in connection with the traffic in rubber, tea, etc. Despite these, the Inner Line became the fixed internal, not international boundary of the Naga Hills. Thereafter the tea planters paid compensation to the Nagas for the land occupied beyond the Inner Line. In spite of the frequent violations, it continued to be in force.

Another synchronous event was the exploration for oil in Assam. Expert explorers were sent to observe local seeps of crude oil in accessible rock surfaces and streams. The drilling of the first oil-well began in November 1866 at Nahorpung, 18 miles southwest of Digboi, the home of Assam's oil industry. The well was abandoned after having reached a depth of 102 ft. when the first producing well was struck at Makum on 26 March 1867. The regular oil production started from 1890 at Digboi. But this adventure of oil exploration was limited to the borders of hills, unable to penetrate into the Naga and other tribal inhabited hills.¹

Precedingly in December 1872 Major Godwin-Austen² was deputed to explore the eastern boundary from the Talizo peak eastward to the watershed between the affluents of the Brahmaputra and Irrawaddy up to the Patkoi pass for the purpose of laying down the boundary line between Manipur and the Naga Hills and not as between Manipur and British territory. The survey was carried out upto the Talizo peak satisfactorily beyond which it was difficult to proceed on account of the difficulty of terrain, hostility of the Nagas and want of labour. Not only these, the mountain ranges namely the Kopamedza and Saramati which enclose between them the broad valley of the Lanier placed the party into difficulty in deciding the limits of the boundary line. Ultimately Godwin failed to assert on what direction the boundary would lie.

In order to settle the work which Major Godwin-Austen had left incomplete, it was resolved that a survey party under Captain Badgley should follow to trace the Lanier river either to some point in the Saramati range or northern source into Dikhu river which flows

¹ See Brown, J.C. and Dey, A.K., *India's Mineral Wealth*, London, 1923, pp. 98-103.

² See *Report on Survey Operations in the Naga Hills and Manipur during the Field Season, 1872-73*.

past Sibsagar into the Brahmaputra, keeping the view of great concession to Manipur which would involve the acceptance of the Kopamedza range, the Government had to obtain accurate information through Captain Butler and Captain Badgley without pledging itself by any demarcation. Along these instructions the party started the survey journey on 1 January 1874, reached Thet Chuma village through Lanier and made for a point in the Saramati range, some twelve miles south-west of the Saramati peak. It was found that the Lanier was a tributary of the Irrawaddy and the Kopamedza range was the actual watershed. In the meantime, the Chief Commissioner of Assam pointed out that there seemed to be no area left for the Dikhu river to drain. But this question remained unresolved. The party returned to Samagudting on March 23, having successfully surveyed about 2,000 miles of the hills of the Nagas, even if two brushes with the Nagas who attacked the party for the violation of their sacred hills were inflicted with some losses.¹ Shortly after a military force consisting of 70 men of the 43rd Native Infantry was sent to demonstrate that any future outbreak would be adequately punished and suppressed. However, the survey and delimitation in their village-states had the effect of causing a great deal of unrest and irritation among the Nagas and led, in some instances, to acts of attack that had to be repelled by force.

On the other side, a survey party led by Major Lance was going ahead with demarcation of the southern boundary of the Sibsagar district in view of delimiting civil jurisdiction after working out the distinction of the low-lands from the hills. The party achieved partial success by having demarcated ten miles only of the 120 miles boundary due to difficulties arising from the nature of the ground. At the broad suggestions of the Chief Commissioner of Assam, this undertaking was abandoned and Captain Badgley accompanied by Lt. Holcombe, Assistant Commissioner of Lakhimpur was instructed to work in a south-western direction from Jeypur with 40 men, while Captain Butler and Lt. Woodthrope of the survey party should proceed from Samagudting to the north-east with 70 men.

On 23 December 1874 Captain Butler's party marched from Samagudting and reached Wokha on 3 January 1875. On the following day a labourer was killed by the hostile Nagas. In the night the party was also surprised by the Naga cry and some shots. But as soon as the disturbance subsided, Captain Butler accompanied by a detachment of forty men went straight to the village and

¹ See Brown, R. *Narrative Report of the Progress of the Survey Party, Naga Hills Season, 1874.*

murdered forty men as a show of force and returned to the camp without loss, after posting a patrolling party within the village for the night. The result was that the Wokha Nagas surrendered the murderers of the labourer to the party.

Captain Butler was congratulated by the Chief Commissioner of Assam for what he had done valiantly which would serve as a lesson to the Nagas and would keep them away from doing any further mischief in future. He carried out considerable survey works in the Naga Hills before he was called to join the expedition for the revenge of the murder of Lt. Holcombe. In February 1875 the survey parties, on various occasions, were attacked among which Lieutenant Holcombe who was in charge of the survey, was killed with 80 followers by the Nagas who became extremely indignant to the survey activities in their territories without their consent. As a result of it, the survey work suffered a lot.

Earlier, in the spring of 1874 Captain Johnstone, officiating Political Agent of the Naga Hills had given protection to weak Nagas from the more ebullient Nagas for what he described as an act "consistent with honour, justice and sound policy". When the Supreme Government was informed about the precedent of Capt. Johnstone by Colonel Keatinge, the Chief Commissioner of Assam, it expressed the reluctant opinion to assume direct administration of the Naga Hills and the orders of Government were issued which stated as follows : "His Excellency in Council considers that Captain Johnstone ought not to have taken this step without consulting superior authority unless, indeed, the necessity of protecting the villages was very urgent. And so far as the step, if approved, may involve us in the reduction of the country by degrees to a regular system of government regardless of expense, to that extent it certainly expresses a policy to which His Excellency in Council does not assent. Moreover, you have described the complication into which the Government might be led by such proceedings and the inconvenient responsibilities that might arise out of it.

"If such complications ensue, the Political Agent, whose action may have brought them to pass, will of course be liable to be called to account for his want of judgment and caution, and you will no doubt take some opportunity of intimating to the Political Agents in your province how far you intend them in future to use their discretion in such contingencies without first taking your orders.

"In regard, however, to the affair now reported, His Excellency in Council would, as it stands at present, desire to leave the management in your hands, to be conducted according to circumstances.

His Excellency in Council does not understand that the affair must necessarily involve any question of large policy or definite acknowledgement of a principle so that it might be best to avoid the use of such formal terms as that of accepting from these Nagas 'their fealty as subjects of the Queen'. Our relations with these barbarous tribes will bear treating much more roughly and indefinitely. The Government of India have not hitherto objected to the establishment over the tracts bordering on British territory if so much influence as will enable our political officers to keep order on the frontier and to prevent raids on the British territory; and insomuch as such raids always grow out of the turbulence and disorganisation across the border, for that reason it is very essential to maintain peace within the scope of the Political Agent's influence on both sides of the frontier. Now the Government are aware that this influence cannot well be established without some kind of action or exercise of material authority. Captain Johnstone's act was an exercise of such authority, and the question for you to decide is, whether it was necessary for the maintenance of good order on the frontier, and also whether it was exercised with prudence and without greater risk than the object was worth. If you are of opinion that these villages are worth protecting in the interests of our own territory, that they can be conveniently and substantially protected, and that they are within easy range of your power to control, then Captain Johnstone's proceedings need to be disallowed. But if you think, after taking account of the localities and state of affairs, that the cost and consequence of this extension of our protectorate has been miscalculated, and that no adequate advantage is to be gained, in that case you will possibly be obliged to take steps to withdraw from an embarrassing and perhaps untenable position. And I am to say distinctly that the Government of India would rather not extend their protecting obligations unless you are satisfied and can report that it is now necessary to uphold what has been already done."

In March 1875 the Chief Commissioner, Colonel Keatinge, came to the definite conclusion that government should proceed with gradual and systematic prosecution of the survey of the Naga Hills not for mere purpose of exploration but as a continuation of the political occupation of the Naga Hills. In July he also recommended the transfer of the Naga Hills headquarters from Samagutting to Wokha, a place where the Nagas like Lothas, Hathigorias, etc. threatening the district could be easily brought to book. This was however postponed to await the report of the survey operations

in the next season before further moves could be decided. At this time survey continued steadily in the Naga village-states with less opposition from the Nagas. The deceptive peace also turned into pretention. Some Naga villages tendered the revenue themselves to the government. But some other powerful and hostile Nagas still posed a substantial threat to the British occupation that the events which followed later indicate.

WAR OF NAGA INDEPENDENCE (1879-80)

The Nagas particularly Angamis, had fought with courage and stamina a war to preserve their independence and freedom against the expansion and inroads of the British from Assam, Manipur and Burma into their village-states. The causes of the war have been described earlier as well as here.

In December 1875 Capt. Butler, the Political Agent was killed in an ambush at the Pangti Lotha village while he was leading a survey party through the hills. But the hostile Nagas were suppressed by Lieutenant Woodthorpe's survey party, and the Pangti village was burnt down. The survey work was carried on in the friendly villages. The Lotha village-states were annexed into the Naga Hills and a British officer posted at Wokha. In 1876 the Angamis attacked a Kutcha Naga village in the North Cachar. This year (1876) Colonel Woodthorpe accompanied by a large escort under Captain Brydon, again entered the Naga Hills and burnt the Ninu village on the refusal of the villagers to surrender some of the culprits in the case of the injury and massacre of 131 men of Lt. Holcombe's party in 1875. And between 1874 and 1877 six villages were plundered, nine were destroyed and 334 persons were murdered particularly by Khonoma and Mozema men even after the Kutcha Nagas submitted to the exactions of the Angamis and took shelter behind the Kukis. The proposal of Colonel Keatinge to send the Political Officer, Carnegy on the trouble spot and to meet Col. Johnstone could not materialise since the latter was busy mastering the local politics of Manipur. The Secretary of State, when informed of such outrage, deprecated any avoidable delay and asked the Chief Commissioner to take vigorous steps for preventing future raids and exacting reparation for the past outrages he considered necessary. Once again, the Mozemas attacked the Kachari Gumaigaju village near Asalu, former headquarters of North Cachar, killed six persons, wounded another two and took two guns away. In the Mozemas' refusal for co-operation, Carnegy with a force of 246 soldiers commanded by Captain Barydon marched towards the

Mozema village on 6 December 1877.

The Mozemas opened fire on the approaching troops to their village. But they were too weak to face the trained British soldiers. Ultimately their village was burnt and they fled into the jungles and hill crests from where they made intermittent firing and night attacks, interrupting communication on the way. Yet a reinforcement of 100 men from 43rd Assam Light Infantry under Lt. Macgregor's command accompanied by Captain Williamson, the Inspector-General of Police came to the rescue of the retreating soldiers from Mozema. Carnegy was shot dead accidentally by one of his own sentries in December 1877. On learning of the accident Captain Williamson went to the place and imposed conditions for patching up with the Mozemas that they should pay a fine of Rs. 50; that they should restore the arms and accoutrements, three constables who had been waylaid and also the contents of a plundered mail bag and that they should surrender four of their own firearms. These terms were accepted by the Mozemas. Peace had returned and so did the expedition back to Samagudting on 28 January 1878.

On 14 November 1878 Kohima lying in the principal Angami village-states along the frontier line of Manipur was occupied as the best headquarters of the Naga Hills district in accordance with the decision of the Chief Commissioner, and so abandoned Samagudting. A British force consisting of 450 armed police men was stationed there to maintain order in the Naga Hills. By this time, the British protectorate was accepted by sixteen Naga village-states out of which thirteen paid a revenue of Rs. 1,032. The Government had anticipated a revenue of Rs. 26,000 from the 7,367 houses of Angami villages and 1,286 Kutcha Naga houses at the rate of Rs. 2 per house. The schemes of opening roads were put in force. In July of the same year, Government of India informed Sir S.C. Bayley, the Assam Chief Commissioner to enforce the general views of the forward policy advocated by Col. Keatinge to bring the Nagas into complete submission. The situation in the Naga Hills reached a climax when the Assam government prepared to hold it by all means and the Nagas tied their belt to repulse such designs.

Damant, the Political Officer of the Naga Hills, seemed to read that the atmosphere in the Naga Hills was generally favourable to put the British policy into action since disturbances because of inter-tribal feuds raging among the Nagas, not knowing that the Nagas were, in fact, preparing to avenge the British at the first opportune moment. To add fuel to the fire of complications, an accident occurred in April 1879. A policeman was shot dead by a Naga

with the intention of taking latter's rifle when he was escorting a mail runner. But the mail runner seized the gun, pointed out to the Naga who fled away and proceeded to Piphima with the mail. In order to ascertain the murder, the chieftains and authorities of the Naga villages around the place were called and made to swear according to the traditional oath. Still the killer could not be traced. In May Damant came to know that Khonoma village was acquiring arms and ammunition, as an evidence of which Damant recovered Rs. 80 from the people of one Naga village which they had got as the price of an old musket stolen from Samagudting and another Rs. 40 from another village as the price of a Hathigoria woman whom they captured and sold as a slave. In June Damant met a representative of Semmoma clan of Khonoma who told him that his clan would not assist the other clans if they would fight against the British. In September some petty demonstrations were staged against the stockade at Piphima. Damant did not take the act seriously as it was attributed more to the insolence of the Nagas. In October he with an escort of ten policemen, visited Piphima, Samagudting and Dimapur to bring up Captain Reid and a detachment of the 43rd Assam Light Infantry.

On 13 October 1879 the tension burst into open when Damant set out on his expedition accompanied by an escort of 21 military and 65 policemen to three Angami village-states, namely Jotsoma, Khonoma and Mozema to impress upon them the necessity of supplying labourers, whenever required. An omen of disaster was on the way. A Jotsoma interpreter who loved Damant warned him not to proceed to Khonoma village for he knew that the people there were preparing for a war. But Damant did not heed his warning and went straight to the village. Damant was shot and died on the spot while he was attempting to enter the fortified gate of Khonoma without any particular precaution. The Nagas fired a volley of bullets on his escort who fled with a loss of 35 soldiers killed, and three domestic servants and 19 wounded. Immediately, a force of 180 police-military men and a civil charge of the garrison deputed on Cawley, District Superintendent of Police at Kohima, made the preparations in anticipation of a sudden attack. A message was sent to Hinde, Extra Assistant Commissioner at Wokha, 57 miles from Kohima and to Johnstone at Imphal. Hinde reached Kohima on 19 October with 40 sepoy and 22 policemen.

What was of greater import, the other thirteen Angami village states raised a force estimated at about 6,000, joined hands in the uprising, besieged the stockade of Kohima for eleven days and re-

duced the garrison to a state of utter misery for want of food and water until the relief reached from Manipur.¹ At the time when Cawley was contemplating seriously the possibility of negotiated surrender under a virtual state of siege, a loyal Naga got into the stockade by night with the news that the British force from Imphal was closing on Kohima. Col. Johnstone, the Political Agent of Manipur, learning the Khonoma incident asked the Manipuri king to supply a force of 2000 Manipuri troops under the command of a Manipuri minister and his two sons. The king obliged him promptly and the flying Johnstone force accordingly arrived at Kohima after covering a distance of nearly 100 miles over the roadless hills and jungles in five days and lifted the siege.

At the same time, the news of the Angami revolt reached the Supreme Government and it was decided to punish the Nagas and to re-assert British sovereignty over them on a firm and permanent basis in view of the Anglo-Afghan War (1878-80). In November 1879 a strong punitive expedition force consisting of the 44th S.L.I., under Colonel Nuttal, C.B., a detachment of the 43rd A.L.I. under Major Evans, and two mountain guns under Lieutenant Mansel, R.A. was led by Brigadier-General, Nation against the Angami village-states.

Having prepared fully for assaults against the thirteen hostile Naga village-states, the British troops having dispersed, a party of the 43rd Assam Light Infantry reached Sephama on November 21 and destroyed their village with a loss of two soldiers, Lt. Maxwell and another two wounded. On the following day, Khonoma was attacked and the fighting lasted for the whole day which was considered to be the severest ever known in these hills and at the nightfall only the lower portion of strongly fortified village built with labour and Naga skill could be captured by the troops. The Nagas evacuated the upper portion in the night and fled into jungle on the crest of the Burrail range where their access to their fields and houses was completely cut off. They were not followed up by the troops in preference to reduce them to terms by the process of blockade from the other way. The British lost in the assault two officers, a Subedar-Major and 44 soldiers and some other officers and soldiers were wounded. Jotsoma was also captured on November 27 and burnt. At the time, on the arrival of reinforcements from Shillong, a detachment took effective punitive measures on the villages that sieged Kohima. Another detachment under Savi discovered the

¹ Damant's invaluable *Manipuri Dictionary* and a paper on the Angami Nagas were destroyed by the Nagas in the Kohima stockade.

route on the west by which the Angamis visited the plains either to Nowgong or Cachar.

Late in January 1880 a party of 55 Khonomas with only seven firearms with them, starting from Popolongmai marched down to the bed of the Barak river through Manipur, requisitioning food from some of the Kutcha Naga villages on the way, crossed a disused road from the Barak into British territory, surprised the Baladhan tea-garden at night, killed manager Blyth and 16 labourers, plundered what they could, burnt everything on the place and returned by the same route. And in spite of morbid conscious of their weakness in the face of British they picked up courage, continued a series of unsuccessful guerrilla attacks on the British troops during February and March and fired at sentries and convoys without making any substantial attack save on Nichiguard outpost which they attacked three times in one week, without causing serious damages. They were at last put down effectively. The hostile Angamis also surrendered their strongholds and submitted gnashingly their tragic teeth to the British.

The causes of the failure of the Naga resistance to the strong British were obvious. As said earlier, the Nagas had been living in their own isolated, disunited, sovereign village-states, each one independent from the other without a common organised political authority and unity which could consolidate the whole of the Nagas into one country by surmounting geographical difficulties in its stride in the manner of the Manipuris, Kacharis, Ahoms, Bhutanese, Sikkimese and Nepalese who had built their kingdoms in the plains and valleys. Instead they were still fighting among themselves in buoyance for supremacy. Under such circumstances, they could not weld themselves together to put up a unified defence against the well disciplined, trained and well-equipped Britishers. Moreover, the Nagas faced two hostile neighbours, namely Manipuris and Assamese who had been trying to coil their ruling designs upon them, that were rebuffed and eventually foiled by the British advance. The Manipuris and Assamese extended all possible help to Britishers in crushing the Naga revolt much to the chagrin of the Nagas. Had these unfavourable conditions not prevailed in the Naga states, the Nagas would have maintained their independence just like Sikkim, Bhutan under British protectorate only and followed a course of friendship. However, it is nebulous and fanciful to see as how the Nagas, inexperienced in modern warfare attempted to retain their dear freedom.

The calamitous effects of the war hit the Nagas hard. After the war, first of all, the freedom-loving Nagas were punished by fines in

grain, cash and unpaid labour, when demanded to serve the British imperial interests. Those villages which took part in the revolt were demolished and in some instances, the site of village was removed from a fortified and inaccessible top to a place more easily accessible. The Khonoma village was the worst effected, its people being not only deprived of their homes but also of terraced fields which were confiscated and the clans were dispersed among other villages, either in Manipur where land and asylum had been arranged or on the fresh land in the Naga Hills which was shown to them by the Political Officer. The villagers remained in a condition of homeless wanderers living in temporary huts in the jungles and depending on the charity of their relatives and neighbours for food and shelter. The result was that of untold suffering and death. Most of the important leaders caught, were killed without extending amnesty to them. The firearms of the Nagas were taken without compensation. Lastly, an agreement was forced upon them which stated that all villages should pay revenue in the shape of one maund of rice and one rupee per house, provide an annual labour for the state purposes and appoint headmen who should be responsible for maintaining order and for carrying out the wishes of the Government.

The terms and conditions of the agreement did not work satisfactorily except, of course, in matter of forced labour. Due to this burden which fell mostly upon the villages near Kohima, many villagers ran away into deep interiors. It was then decided that Naga labourers should be paid at the rate of four annas a day, instead of the subsistence rate of two annas. In the matter of fines also, the Political Officer was given power not to demand the full payment if it could not be easily paid. Second, the dispossessed Khonoma and other villagers refused to settle anywhere else, as desired by the Government except at the site of their destroyed village though they received shelter and livelihood from the other Naga villages. Forced settlement was possible only by wholesale coercion of the British troops. The situation grew worse when other villages refused to take up the confiscated lands. According to their traditional belief such lands as were deserted by the villagers, were not to be cultivated in the fear of future retribution by God or men. Under such circumstances, the policy of dispensation was found impossible to be implemented; even if did so, it would only incur more hostility of the Nagas with whom the Government was following the policy of appeasement. Sir Stuart Bayley, the Chief Commissioner of Assam therefore decided in favour of greater leniency and recommended that permission should be given to the dispossessed villages to reoccupy their old land subject to cer-

tain conditions that they were not to be reoccupied till February 1881 when the cultivation season commenced and with further condition that in case of Khonoma, the village site should on no account be restored to them, and that the three clans could build their houses on separate sites in the valley, away from their former strong position on the height to be marked off for them by the Political Officer. Finally, difficulty arose in regard to the assessment of revenue also, when it was found that the Nagas were not in a position to pay one rupee, plus one maund of rice per house, though their revenue was fixed more to exact obedience from the Nagas than for adding to revenue. On the report of Major Michell, the Political Officer in the Naga Hills, of the destruction of the grain in the operations of the British troops, the Chief Commissioner considering all the matters, revised the rate of revenue from one rupee and one maund of rice per house to two rupees per house only as the usual house tax levied from the other tribes of Assam. He gave the Political Officer a free hand in dealing with the Naga villages in matters of assessment. The Nagas accepted these conditions, came back to their villages, built their houses new and resumed their agricultural pursuits.

Elliott who succeeded Sir S.C. Bayley as Chief Commissioner of Assam, visited Khonoma in March 1881, observed the return of normalcy and peace to Naga life and put forward a fresh administrative policy entailing that the system of forced labour, levied in a very unequal way which had incensed the Nagas, should be set right at once; the ban on carrying of arms, including the traditional spears by the Nagas should be removed, and the terrace cultivation should gradually replace jhum cultivation. However, the revenue fixed was collected from the Angami villages without the use of force. The Lothas and Rengmas had not been assessed for revenue barring some Rengmas who lived across Dhansiri in the Mikir hills. The boundaries of the Naga Hills district were settled almost identical to those laid down in 1875, with the exception of the portion between the Doyang and the north-east corner of the district which was left unsettled. On the west they were the same with a slight modification whereby a triangular land inhabited by the Kukis and Kacharis, the former (Kukis) being settled as a screen to protect the North Cachar villages from the onslaughts of the Angamis and bounded on the south by Langting and Langreng rivers, on the north-east by Lumding and on the north-west by the Doyang, was transferred from the Naga Hills to North Cachar on the east frontier; there followed the course of the Doyang to where that river abandoned its northward direction and flows south-west; hence the line was

drawn to Sibsagar or border in such a way as to include all the villages of Lothas and exclude all those of Hathigorias.¹ Thus the British annexed the independent Naga village-states into the British India empire and established their rule upon the unruly Nagas, leaving the eastern Naga inhabited part completely unadministered till 1947.

But this ill-organised Naga War of 1879-80 was much more notable event in the history of Nagaland, if not so explicitly nationalist in character, although the British administrators in colonial times dismissed it as a minor revolt or inconvenience by maintaining reticence to publicise the war of those whom they ruled as harmful to them. The brave Nagas who chose death rather than national dishonour went down as legendary heroes in Naga history. In two-year duration, the disruption caused by it and the staggering cost in blood and treasure provide the indices of how serious the affair was and that it was a challenge to the British authority. After their uprisings were crushed and Nagaland was blotted from the map by divisions into Assam, Manipur and Burma, the British policy towards the Nagas followed the course of "divide and rule" in much negligent way and the small Naga nationalists' attempts to resecure the unification of all the Naga village-states were pared down to a derisory level and the future seemed dark for them.

¹ *Assam Proceedings*, November 1882.

The British Rule 1880-1947

The West wind will rise over the East for some years and fall.
Then the East wind will prevail lamberently over itself;
and all wooden platters will become united under their ruler.

—A Naga Prophecy

ADMINISTRATIVE ADJUSTMENT

After ruthless suppression of the jealously guarded Naga nationalism and the subsequent establishment of the Naga Hills district with well defined boundaries as above mentioned, the next objective of the British policy in Eastern Himalayan region set to consolidate their newly acquired dominion and not to extend to the unknown and unexplored area to the north-east of the Naga Hills district by way of interfering directly in the inter-tribal feuds, a 'mistake' which early British officers in the area had committed. Sir Robert Reid writes in *History of the Frontier Areas bordering on Assam (from 1883-1941)*: "The final decision to make the Naga Hills a British district was taken in 1881...The necessity of protecting the borders of Nowgong and Sibsagar against raiding Nagas which in the early days compelled us to penetrate into the hills little by little ceased with the formation of the Naga Hills district. But the process of penetration went on inexorably, if irregularly. It was impossible to draw a line as the boundary of our area of control and to say that we should be blind and deaf to all that went on across that line. The trans-frontier Nagas' raid on our administered villages, the latter are involved in dispute with the former, head-hunting and massacres go on just across the border and under the very noses of our officers. In such conditions local officers inevitably, and with reason, clamour for forward policy. The Chief Commissioner sometimes supports them, sometimes he does not. The Government of India is nearly always reluctant. But the frontier moves forward."

McCabe, the Deputy Commissioner (1881-94) of the Naga Hills was authorised to confine his jurisdiction of friendly intercourse with the Naga chiefs, give good advice for the peaceful settlement of any dispute that might have come up and sometimes distribute presents, just to keep the Nagas in good spirit. But sometimes, the quarrels

and killings of the British subjects by the fierce independent tribesmen on the eastern borders led inevitable military expeditions to punish the murderers and to annex the eastern territories ostensibly in the interest of peace and order.

In July 1884 McCabe led a punitive expedition against Hathigorias who had murdered the nephew of a Lotha chief and accomplished the task. A little later, he met the Chief Commissioner of Assam and emphasised upon him to revise the policy regarding the Naga Hills. But the Government of India did not favour any change of policy at this time, though the Governor-General was not against enhancing political control over the east of the Lotha Naga villages, taking action at outrages against British subjects, violation of the Inner Line and disregard to any inter-tribal feuds. In January 1885 two military expeditions were sent to some eastern Angami villages lying along the Manipur border and to some other villages for the sake of assisting political authority. The Deputy Commissioner of Sibsagar was also directed to visit the Konyak Naga villages for a similar show of force. Still the punitive expedition designed against the Maram Nagas of Manipur—the assassins of the two Angami Nagas could not be accomplished. The Chief Commissioner of Assam did not prevail upon the King of Manipur to take appropriate action against the culprits when he was told of the great rôle of the Manipur King in the Kabow valley expedition under Col. Johnstone's command in the Third Anglo-Burmese War. There were a number of disturbances occurred on the borders of the Naga Hills district where the head-hunting Nagas were rampant. But, after the Ao Naga villages were incorporated into the Naga Hills district in 1889, at their own request, the Government refused to extend the administration beyond this line wherein the Nagas lived free, in spite of repeated recommendations of local officers for extension of British sway to them. Over again, in the wake of the Manipuri rebellion against British government in 1891, the Nagas particularly the Khonomas took up arms against the British. They fell upon a number of British subjects on the Manipur-Kohima road in 1891 and killed them. A Sikh regiment was brought immediately to Golaghat and the uprising was put down before it could spread to other parts of the Naga Hills. But after this revolt, the Nagas completely abandoned any attempt of revolt as an inept and lost cause and started doing obeisance to the British.

On account of a raid by the Tangkhul Nagas on Shawpu outpost near the Burmese border in the Chindwin area in March 1895, the question of clear demarcation of the boundaries between Manipur

and Burma, and between Manipur and the independent Naga village-states became pertinent again. But the Government still held that the unadministered area, lying between the upper Chindwin and Manipur should not be interfered until and unless the tribes raided the British administered areas. But the boundary between Burma and Manipur from Konga Thana to Tinzin river was demarcated with pillars by a body of commissioners. Col. Maxwell and Macnabb in 1896.¹ In 1910 a section of the Konyak Nagas' area, east of the Dikhu was added to the Naga Hills, bringing the north, eastern corner of the district up to the Taukok river. Thereafter, the tribal feuds and raids became less frequent although they did occasionally break out and troops had to be despatched to quell them.

To facilitate the administration, the Naga Hills district was divided into two sub-divisions namely Kohima and Mokokchung. A Deputy Commissioner assisted by an European assistant was posted at Kohima whereas Mokokchung was placed under the charge of European police officer along with an engineer and a civil surgeon in the district. The Calcutta High Court was restricted in its jurisdiction in the district except for such criminal cases in which European British subjects were involved. The criminal and civil procedure codes also did not apply to this district. However, the Deputy Commissioner was empowered to exercise upon life and death, subject to confirmation by the Chief Commissioner of Assam. He toured their villages, settled the disputes between tribes or villages, studied their ways of life in their midst and submitted a comprehensive report annually to the Government of India as to how the administrative policy should be formulated and implemented.

But the Government had given the village headmen (*Gaonburas*) the authority to decide disputes both of a civil and criminal nature, according to their customary laws, which perhaps were the most acceptable form of justice in the Naga society. There were nominally a number of paid interpreters (*dobashis*) appointed by the government from among the native aides of high influence, integrity and capacity in the courts of the Deputy Commissioner and sub-divisional officers to help them in deciding the disputes of the district. These *dobashis* who knew Assamese or Manipuri or sometimes English and could translate tribal dialects into those languages, wearing their official uniform of red flannel waistcoat and red blanket plus tribal costume, played an appreciable role in enhancing the

¹ See for details, *Foreign Proceedings*, August 1896, letter No. 36, pp. 84 and also, reprinted in Dr. Chakravorty, B.C. *British Relations with the Hill Tribes of Assam since 1858*. Calcutta, 1964, pp. 126-28.

British interest in the area. At the same time Government also pursued a policy of non-interference in their customs, laws, traditions and discouraged litigation as far as possible. Tuensang Naga villages were administered by the Governor-General of India under the provisions of a special order-in-council. Severe punishments to law-breakers ensured peace and order. Notwithstanding, in order to control the disturbances caused by tribal feuds and sometimes by head-hunting wars, a military police battalion with strength of 72 officers and 598 men was posted in district. Besides this, a civil police force consisting of 29 head constables and men under a sub-inspector, whose jurisdiction was confined to Kohima town and the Manipur cart-road within the district was also there. A small jail was set up at Kohima where about 32 prisoners could be kept.

The British government introduced western system of education assisted by the Christian missionaries to bring Nagas in touch with modern civilization and to use educated class as a link between the ruler and the ruled. But progress of education till 1908 was not quite encouraging. In 1903-4, there were one secondary, 22 primary and 2 special schools in the district. More than two-third of the pupils were in the primary schools. In the same year, the total expenditure on education was Rs. 6,000 of which Rs. 256 was derived from fees. The number of students under instruction in 1890-1891, 1900-1901 and 1903-1904 was 297, 319 and 647 respectively. According to the 1901 census, the literacy rate was just 1.03 per cent. There were three hospitals, with 24 beds, the expenditure on which came to Rs. 6,000 and was met from the provincial revenues.

But in the field of the transport and communication, the progress was quite mentionable. In 1903-1904, seventy-three miles of cart-road and about 473 miles of bridle paths were opened and maintained in the district. The cart-road from Manipur to Dimapur where the Assam General railway connected through Kohima was widened. This gave great relief to the Nagas who formerly used paths that were very narrow and risky and almost outgrown by thick jungle. In the economic sphere, the currency system was introduced. As a whole, land revenue was not assessed as it would have incited the Nagas against Government, except on a small estate held by the American Baptist mission. A house tax of Rs. 3 was realized from the Angamis whereas Rs. 2 and Rs. 5 were fixed for other Nagas and foreigners respectively. In this way, the Naga village-states hitherto under separate kings or chiefs and hostile to one another came into the rule of a different people (the British), a different religion and different ways of life.

INTRODUCTION OF CHRISTIANITY

An important concomitant of the British conquest of the Naga inhabited hills was undoubtedly the expansion of Christian missionary movement. We have seen that before Christianity came in the Naga village-states, the Nagas professed a form of animism which has its decency and humanness. But this had not been developed and proselytised in an institutional form as Hinduism, Buddhism, Jainism, Confucianism and Taoism, Islam and Christianity did, and it had certain drawbacks from which accordingly, its virtues suffered as against the advanced religions. Otherwise if it was developed well, it would certainly have flowered into a universal faith. Strangely, when the religious or spiritual conquests of Buddhism and Hinduism upon China, Tibet, Vietnam, Cambodia, Korea, Thailand, Japan, Burma and Islam upon Malaysia, Singapore and Indonesia were accomplished, the Nagas and other tribes of Assam and Burma remained untouched by any of these faiths for centuries together. It was because of the geographical inaccessibility of the hilly abodes of the Nagas and not because of their wild and warring nature, conditioned by wild environment. It may also be said that, had the British not come to India, the Nagas could have been easily converted either to Hinduism that would have penetrated from Assam and Manipur or Buddhism from Burma, though the chances were remote for Islam because of Muslim influence in Assam and Manipur was limited since the people of the plains in Assam and Manipur had already embraced Hinduism as a superior religion than that of their own animism—Sanamahi. But at the very beginnings of its proselytization, the rise of the Burmese ambition for empire and the consequent British embroilment and defeat of the Burmese in 1826 took everything to the dogs. It was now Christianity that had appeared as a powerful cultural conquest along with the establishment of the Britain paramountcy in Assam and Manipur. The American, Norwegian, Welsh, Spanish and Italian Christian missionaries came in quite a few numbers and settled in the inaccessible and dangerous places in the mountains, forests and plains to preach the message of God, to heal the sufferings and to educate the people.

Christianity, as we know, is traced to the teachings of Jewish Jesus Christ, however the Ten Commandments of Moses forms substantial background. Jesus, the son of Joseph and Virgin Mary, born in a village of Bethlehem in about 4 A. D. lived an ascetic life in carpentry up to 30 years of age and after which he spent forty days in meditation in the jungle to receive the command of God to save humanity from sin. Proclaiming himself as the Son of God and

promising the 'Kingdom of Heaven', he preached love, belief and repentance and served the poor, down-trodden, exploited and unfortunate people. After John the Baptist was beheaded by the Romans for his condemnation and loose morals as allegedly put to political rebellion, he took up the Messiah work and denounced the Jewish rituals for which he was condemned for blasphemy by a Jewish court. At last he was crucified by the Romans under the order of the Governor of Judea, on Friday 29 A.D. (hence Good Friday) and buried in a private tomb from where he rose on the third day, appeared before his mother, disciples and he was taken up into Heaven to re-appear on the Day of the Last Judgment. Then his disciples spread his teachings to all parts of Roman empire, mostly due to the endeavours of Saint Paul.

But, Christianity is believed to have been brought to India in 52 A.D. by St. Thomas, one of the disciples of Jesus Christ just after twenty years of Christ's crucifixion on the cross. He lived for about 20 years, preached Christianity and built seven churches on the Malabar coast under the Hindu kings. But his mission was later on staked to progress at the prime of Hinduism in India. In the 16th century, the Protestant church emerged in a way to protest against the Pope and the Roman Catholic church hierarchy by a German priest, Martin Luther, upon the foundation set long before by Marsilio of Padua and William of Occam. By no means, it followed many other denominations with different beliefs and forms centripetal to Christianity. Again, in the 18th and 19th centuries, Christianity forged ahead much as a corollary of the British rule and as an instrument of western imperialism and colonialism followed everywhere in their conquered lands, say in Asia, Australia, America, Europe, Africa, although it cannot be denied that Christianity aims at universal love, brotherhood and peace throughout the world without distinction of race, sex, language and geographical divisions in a fine texture of idealism. The devoted missionaries who were trained to model upon the life of Christ with the proselytising fervour worked heart and soul to heal the sinful and chaotic world and died for it, preaching the gospel to every creature. India was no exception in this matter. Discovering that the presence of Christianity in the subjugated India would strengthen their imperial authority the British company government adopted the policy of encouraging Christianity in India after the decision of the 1813 Charter. Yet its penetration was far from going deeper into the centuries-old citadels of Hinduism and Islam which had become indivisible from the fabric of Indian way of life and any act of condemnation would

imperil their own life as the Sepoy Mutiny of 1857 had indicated. But it got acceptance only from the tribes and depressed or down-trodden classes, called "untouchables" thrown out by rigid casteism. The untouchables in 20th century raised the slogan of equality which coincided with the Gandhi's Hinduism in a secular character that took outcastes back in their fold as Harijans or 'children of God' whereas the tribes embraced Christianity as the new civilised way of life, whom we find mostly in Nagaland, Mizoram, Meghalaya, etc. Yet, it can be said that Christianity succeeded in winning converts because of the fact that apart from the Biblical stories, the teachings of Christianity and Western social life and ethics were identical to the animistic beliefs and the social life of the Garos, Khasis, Mizos and Nagas. Under such favourable environment, it took its roots there and spread rapidly with personal dedication and philanthropic spirits and works of the Christian missionaries.

First of all, David Scott, the first Commissioner of Assam brought some English missionaries who were deeply well-versed in theology, to preach Christianity among the Garos as he was convinced that the primitive tribes were more likely to profit by the Gospel. After David Scott, Major Francis Jenkins succeeded him as the Commissioner of Assam, Agent to the Governor-General, North-east Frontier. At this time, Jenkins had already acquired quite a lot of intimate knowledge about the hill tribes in Assam, saw that Christianity would be attractive to the animistic hill people for it would generate feelings of equality and self-respect denied to them by the arrogant Hindunised plains Mongolians and other Hindus and was of the express view that "the tribes on the Assam frontier should be brought within the scope of missionary activities as early as possible as the influence of persons skilled in the languages of these tribes, and devoting their time and attention to humanise these rude races could not fail of being useful to us and to them". Accordingly, Major Jenkins asked the American Baptist Foreign Missionary Society to come to Assam to work among the heathen or non-Christian tribes of the Empire and promised to give all possible personal and official assistance. His invitation to spread Christianity among the primitive head-hunters for the Kingdom of God in the advancement of human civilization, was readily accepted by the missionaries.

In 1836, in spite of the fears and apprehensions of strange people, Reverend Nathan Brown, Miles Bronson, Rev. O.T. Cutter came to Assam to take up the proselytizing work at all hazards, ventured into the wilds of the frontier, keeping the vicarious sufferings of Christ in mind and went forth to Sadiya where the British company govern-

ment had established its headquarters. They were the first American Baptist missionaries who gave the best thought and energies and came to civilise the life of the head-hunting people to modern scientific and cultural way through the spread of Christianity. Unfortunately, they could not achieve any appreciable success in the midst of the Hindus, Muslims and animists of the plains. They left Sadiya and came to Sibsagar where the British administrative headquarters were established after they (British) had abandoned Sadiya when the British soldiers suffered casualties in an attack by the Buddhist Khamptis. They laid a small foundation of the mission with the school and distributed elementary books of instruction printed in Assamese and English. But they too achieved of no account there and had to close down their mission.

As decided by the American Baptist mission to take the work in the Naga Hills while they were at Jeypur, Rev. Miles Bronson set out in the hills of Naga tribes in 1839-40 at Namsang, a village in the Tirap frontier for preaching Christianity. He established a Naga mission school to teach the three R's and Gospel to the Nagas, where sons and daughters of many chiefs of the eastern Naga tribes were persuaded for education. He asked the Governor-General's Agent to grant him Rs. 100 a month towards the maintenance of this school as the Government granted financial aid to the mission schools in the Garo Hills. Taking it improper to give direct aid to missions, the Government made grants shown in the Agent's contingent bill for objects of practical utility connected with the improvement of the Naga villages, and spent it with the view of leading its population into habits of industry. Residing among the Nagas, this American missionary had known Nagas better than any other Europeans and urged the Government to extend its direct control over them. But despite his passionate zeal, love and service to the Nagas, he had to leave the place due to illness, death of his sister and other misfortunes fallen upon him. The work was eventually stopped till the arrival of Rev. E.W. Clark to the Sibsagar mission in 1871.

In 1841 William Robinson wrote that he "hoped that by the blessing of Divine Providence through the efforts of these excellent men, the Nagas, who from time immemorial have been the scorn and prey of their more civilized neighbours, may shortly begin to emerge from the dark barbarism which now renders the tribe of each hill an enemy to that of the next, and has hitherto prevented an Alpine tract of great natural resources and high fertility, from supporting more than a very scanty population of savages in a state of discomfort and privation." But the mission work could not march much ahead on ac-

count of the vigorous opposition of the local people and ignorance of their languages by the missionaries. By 1851 Rev. S.W. Whiting was able to convert some Nagas from the villages of Longjang and Merangkong, whom were attached to the church in Sibsagar of Assam.

Another Baptist pioneering missionary through whose selfless and meticulous efforts Christianity took unshaken roots in Nagaland was Rev. Dr. E. W. Clark. He came to Sibsagar in 1869 with a strong determination to preach Christianity among the Naga tribes. From there, by chance, he met an Ao Naga by name Subongmeren from Molungyimsen or Deka Haimong village among the visitors in Sibsagar and learnt from him about the people and place where the British had not so far extended their authority. He persuaded Assamese Christian Godulla to learn Ao language from Subongmeren. Now he sent both of them to Deka Haimong to preach Christianity. In November 1872 nine Nagas among whom they brought to Sibsagar were baptised by Clark. The converted Nagas went to their village and built a chapel there. Thinking of imminent danger to his life in their midst but making his mind firmly to undertake his mission to see the Nagas civilised, to remove their evil social practices and ideas, their ways of life assimilated to the framework of Christian society and their good ideas and ideals encouraged, Rev. Clark marched through the jungle paths and reached in Molungyimsen village on 18 December 1872 and baptised fifteen more Nagas. Now Rev. Clark saw a little favourable atmosphere for the Prospects of his mission and approached Colonel Hepinson, the Commissioner of Assam for establishing a permanent mission among the Ao Nagas straddling the hills between the Dikhu and Disoi rivers on the Sibsagar frontier. The British Indian government readily permitted him to do so for the proselytization of the Christianity only, not on any commercial and imperialistic incentives which would conflict with the British imperialist dominion in British Indian empire.

On the other hand, as Christianity was progressing there, Dr. Clark separated the Christian Nagas from the animist village, in a way to lay a solid foundation of Christianity and fear of persecution by the chief and founded Molungyimsen Christian village in 1876.¹ It now became the centre of the Christian mission in the Naga hills, particularly for Ao Nagas. He vigorously made his mission progress by leaps and bounds. And how Rev. Clark strove in the midst of opposition is quite interesting. He smiled at the Naga men, women and children, spoke meekly to them, treated them tenderly, cured the sick, prayed for them and distributed to them the leaflets,

¹ See Clark, Mrs. M.M., *A Corner in India*, Philadelphia, 1907.

pamphlets and photos of Christ wherever he went and whomever he met. Once he was hit by the spear of the hostile Nagas that he restored calmly to them. Boys and girls were collected around his house to impart them education through Assamese and English languages. He established schools, entrusted to the care of the teacher living in the village, taught in a primary school for two hours, quite apart from his preaching engagement. Besides, he learnt their unwritten language, compiled a large vocabulary, translated some portions of the scripture of the Bible, composed Christian hymns in Ao language and produced Christian literature. He forbade to drink ricebeer or alcohol as undrunkeness "means fewer quarrels and less sexual immorality," and distributed unfermented American grape-juice at the celebrations of the Lord's Supper. Mrs. E. W. Clark established a school for Naga girls in order to strengthen her husband's missionary efforts. Their converts were sent from time to time to the neighbouring villages as teachers to teach the Bible stories. Rev. E. W. Clark used to visit the villages himself to settle of blood-feuds and advised the people to live in peace and goodwill with their neighbours. He urged the British to extend their authority to Ao and other Naga areas which was rejected as undesirable. Thus he was able to convert more Nagas into Christian faith.

On 4 October 1894 Rev. Clark abandoned Molungyimsen and moved his American Baptist Missionary Society to Impur, 10 miles north of Mokokchung, a better centre not only for the Ao Nagas but for the Semas, Lothas, Changs, Phoms, Konyaks, Kalya-Kengyus and Sangtams. It was only from this Impur headquarters under the charge of Dr. Heggard and his wife along Rev. Clark and Mrs. Clark that the American Baptist mission set a crusade for spreading the Gospel, education and medical services in the Naga Hills. Along with the establishment of schools and rendering medical assistance to the sick, the Baptist mission built churches in the Naga village states, which threw a challenge to the basic concept and form of Naga life such as head-hunting, village feud, drinking ricebeer, bachelor dormitory, superstition, religious and social sacrifices, etc. The Nagas were exhorted to become Christian, by leaving all these unproductive concepts and practices for the happiness of soul, love and service as taught by Jesus Christ.

In spite of his best efforts, Rev. E. W. Clark could not succeed in his work in the Angami and Lotha village-states due to disturbances arising out of the resentment of the Nagas against the Government's encroachment of administration and survey activities. He and his wife left the Naga Hills in 1911 after they had worked stren-

ously for more than 39 years for the proselytization of Christianity. However during the years, Rev. and Mrs. E. W. Clark not only produced an Ao English dictionary, a hymn book and a few other books but also translated the gospels of Mathew and John in the Ao language for the schools, by dint of which Christianity had flourished there.

In 1885 Rev. D.E. Witter, another American Baptist missionary was sent to Wokha, the centre of the Lotha Nagas known for their amenable and light disposition. This Lothâ mission promised a good beginning in spite of the unhappy conditions created by the British administration. But after having studied Lotha language and prepared something for writing the first grammar and vocabulary, Rev. Witter had left the place owing to ill health and no other missionary came in his place there.

For some years, the American Baptist mission had not decided to pursue their proselytising activities in the Angami villages mainly because of the fact that the mission could not go ahead under unfavourable circumstances followed by the political events and the independent modes of the Angami life which A. W. Davis, Deputy Commissioner of Naga Hills aptly described as a land of practically no religion. Yet after some years the situation changed and people became submissive. Sir Johnstone, the Political Officer of Manipur encouraged the missionaries to put in their efforts in converting the Angamis. He pointed out, "properly taught and judiciously handled, the Angamis would have made a fine manly set of Christians, of a type superior to most Indian native converts, and probably devoted to our rule. As things stand at present, I fear they will be gradually corrupted and lose the good qualities, which have made them attractive in the past, and that, as time goes on, unless some powerful counter-influence is brought to bear on them they will adopt the vile, bigoted type of Mahommedanism prevalent in Assam and Cachar and instead of becoming a tower of strength to us, be a perpetual weakness and source of annoyance."

Thereafter Rev. C.D. Kings (1879-1886) was deputed to Kohima from Samagudting when the Nagas were hostile and suspicious of anything coming from outside. After he had built a school and a church, Rev. Kings went back to America on account of ill health. In the same year Rev. Dr. S.W. Rivenburg (1886-1923) succeeded him and took charge of the Baptist mission work in the Angami, Rengma, a part of Sema, Zeliang and Kuki tribes. In the beginning he attended the sick in their homes, tried to convince them for the service of God and converted a very few

educated Angamis to Christianity and a school was reopened by him and by 1910 seventy-five boys were enrolled; Angami language was reduced into writing by Roman script and some other Biblical literature translated from Greek into Angami. He worked for about 37 years at Kohima during which he converted many Nagas into Christianity, built churches alongwith his educational and medical services for civilizing the Nagas. G.W. Supplee (1921-1949) came in the Angami area. A Bible school was established at Kohima to train the Church leaders for preaching management. In 1932 all the Angami village pastors were formed into the American Baptist Church Council. Supplee became the principal of the Kohima Mission school and popularised the Christian music to the Nagas through the Christian students. In the event of Indian Independence in 1947, the Baptist mission school was given to the government. Rev. J.E. Tanquist (1912-1948) infiltrated into the Sema villages also from Angami area and ultimately, a Sema Association was formed in 1922.

On the other hand, in 1894 Rev. W. Pettigrew was also sent for Baptist missionary work in Manipur. First of all, he chose a place in Mao Naga area to set up his mission headquarters, but was chased away by the animist Nagas who were against Christianity. Then he arrived at Imphal, the Manipur capital. Here also he experienced utterly stiff opposition from the Hindunized Mongolian Meiteis who were not susceptible to Christian conversion for they had already obstinately adhered to Hinduism. Finally he left Imphal for Ukhrul, the centre of Tangkhul Nagas, found proselytising prospects there, began to establish schools and to convert the Nagas there. He built a church also for them when he had about a hundred converts. By 1907, he had laid a strong foundation of Christianity in the Naga hills of Manipur. When the mission succeeded in converting many Nagas and Kukis into Christianity, its headquarters were shifted to Kangpokpi in 1919.

Yet, the progress of Christianity was very slow till the Second World War after which large scale conversion of the Nagas into Christianity took place with the presence of miracles and wonders; the opponents to it were easily persuaded or overawed by charm of Jesus Christ; a number of churches, almost one in each village came up; schools were established and medical facilities extended; and the Naga Baptist Christian conventions were held. Persons who studied in the Christian schools were taken as teachers in the government lower primary schools established in the villages. All these activities had made strong appeal to the Nagas whose pantheistic tradi-

tions and animism offered it a very fertile ground. Finally, when the Christian Nagas had grown in confidence and cohesion, they resorted themselves to the establishment of institutions in order to disseminate the Gospel among the non-Christian Nagas.

There were quite a few foreign missionaries in the Naga Hills district and other Naga hills till 1947. But after the independence of India, all of them were forced out of Nagaland when some of their activities were found by the Government of India as politically motivated, inviting themselves to undertake by active participation and overt demonstration, but invert encouragement to the Naga nationalist movement for freedom than religious zeal for which they had got permission. Nonetheless, we cannot afford to ignore some accounts of the missionaries who moved untiringly from village to village, acting as both spiritual and political advisers to shed a great deal of light on the nature of the Naga society as well as providing clues as to the way the modern scientific civilization was in fact indicated to the Nagas.

The coming of Christianity in Nagaland in 19th century and its gradual embryonic growth through the American Baptist mission than other denominations like the Presbyterian, Roman Catholic, Methodist Church, Seventh Day Adventist, Salvation Army, Church of Christ, etc. had struck very deep roots among the remote-self-contained and isolated Nagas and affected them brusquely in positive as well negative ways. It had become a striking subversive force against their long-held traditional assumptions upon which the early stages of their civilization were based and eventually changed altogether to new institutions and cultural forms, though Nagaism still manages to keep firm. Yet the process ends an old era and defines a new era by the break it provides with the past. It forbade the Nagas killing in perpetual feud, head-hunting, forced to abstain from drinking their favourite ricebeer or madhu not based on Scripture but from the point of social benefits and for performing some of their mystical religious rites and rituals, ceremonies like taboos and gennas, and curtailed the propitiation of the evil gods and other licentious activities and from sleeping in bachelors' or maidens' dormitories and from taking part in the feasts of merit held by the rich people for social, religious and prestigious reasons. Quite extremely, a sort of excommunication also had been carried out by the church authority against unfaithful Christian Nagas who used to break the Sabbath and to participate in the traditional dancing and singing of folk songs. All such things had been forbidden outright as contrary to the tenets or teachings of Christianity. Quite unexpect-

tedly, Christianity widened the barrier, tension and chronic conflict between the people in the hills and plains as the former were animists and Christians whereas the latter were Hindus and Muslims by religion. Prof. W.C. Smith, of the University of Southern California pointed out: "Familiarity with missionary attitudes and practices, which are all too characteristic, makes inevitable the conclusion that there is entirely too much negation, too much taboo, and too little that is positive. There is grave danger that Christianity, as presented to these people, comes to be little more than the adoption of another set of taboos, and taboo is no new element in the life of any group on a low cultural level. Under the old system the Nagas had to refrain from working in the fields on certain days, lest their god Lizaba curse the village with an epidemic or blight the rice crop; now they must refrain from work on the Christian Sabbath, lest Jehovah, the God of Israel, smite them for their wickedness."¹ But "methods of proselytising had become modified as the years passed, and latter-day missionaries sensibly tried to preserve all that was good in old traditions."² Whatever criticism may be for letting the cultural identity and ancient moorings of the Nagas weak, abortive and declining as Verrier Elwin put that "the activities of the Baptist mission among the Nagas have demoralised the people, destroyed tribal solidarity and forbidden the joys and feasting, the decorations and romance of communal life,"³ it was Christianity that had pushed the Nagas out of the thought of seclusion and isolation from which they were suffering for centuries into open ideas, ideals and civilizations of the peoples of the world.

In essence, in this way Christianity worked miracles which it had never before in the land. The Christian missionaries along with the British administrators took a leading part in bringing an end to the evil practices among the Nagas by teaching them as to how to live together in peace, love and tolerance with one another as good neighbours. Generally it can also be said that the Christianity was an inward machinery which brought modernization, western ways of life, education, the renaissance of Nagaism and unity among Nagas. Not only that christianity brought about the social reforms also. Before the impact of Christianity, some "backward Naga tribes particularly Ao and Kolyu-Kengyu with their

¹ Missionary Activities and Acculturation of Backward Peoples, in *The Journal of Applied Sociology*, March-April 1923, p. 185.

² Sir Robert Reid, *Years of Change in Bengal and Assam*, London, 1966, p. 109.

³ *The Aborigines, Oxford Pamphlets on Indian Affairs*, Bombay, 1944, p. 14.

faces and bodies tattooed to make dark complexions, athletic tough frames, hideously wild and ugly visages, by pricking the juice of the belu nut into the skin, the cropping of the hair of the unmarried girls and ugly hair-cut of men and the kilt of ring over the penis by the Tangkhuls. The converted Christian Nagas abandoned all these profane practices and earnestly urged their brethren non-Christians also to give them up as a result of which non-Christians too reformed themselves and became modernised.

The contribution to music made by the missionaries is also considerable. They brought to Nagaland a number of western musical instruments and songs and introduced new musical modes and forms. In other words, the missionaries brought about numerous changes in fundamental constitution of Naga thought and action and improved their lot by translating of the Christian hymns and other literary works into Naga languages and distributing the Biblical and other literature, by introducing the Roman script in absence of their own, by preaching Gospel and church history, political, economic, social and historical ideas of the West, and by establishing schools, hospitals, and churches in order to make the life of the Nagas more orderly, more civilized, more comfortable and more cultured. Thus, in short, Christianity imprinted the civilization in a considerable degree of resonance not only to the Naga life but also a far-reaching moral crusade to change the Naga personality in the direction of self-sacrifice and service for humanity.

NAGAS IN THE FIRST WORLD WAR

The First World War which ravaged the world for about four years (1914-18) witnessed the most brutal display of barbarism in human history after the so-called Second Hundred Years War (1689-1815) confining its cataclysm to European nations, namely England, France, Holland, Spain, Portugal. Though essentially European in origin, the World War involved practically the whole of the human race—white, black, brown and yellow on one side or the other. It was fought on land, sea and in the air, mobilizing all human and material resources of nations on a hitherto unprecedented scale and at the end it claimed 29,000,000 both military and civilian dead and billions of dollars spent. The hard-built cities were destroyed and the Russian Revolution, which toppled the Czar by the Soviets indoctrinated in Marxism-Leninism, heralded the new era of communism.

We know that the war broke out of the inevitable conditions—rapid rise of nationalism, militarism, armament race, secret treaties.

alliances and colonialism among the powerful nations when Austria-Hungary declared war on 28 July 1914 against Serbia at the assassination of Archduke Francis Ferdinand, with his morganatic wife, Duchess Sophie by Principan, an irremediable Serbian on a visit to Sarajevo, the capital of Bosnia. The German Emperor, Kaiser as a faithful ally of Austria-Hungary since the time of Chancellor Bismark, declared war against Russia and France and stormed Belgium. Unable to arrest the deteriorating situation, and guided more by political considerations, Britain declared war upon Germany. Austria-Hungary and Germany were joined by Turkey and Bulgaria whereas original Allies were supported by eighteen other nations, mentionable among which were Japan, Italy and the U.S.A. At the failure of its neutrality, U.S.A. entered into the war 'to make the world safe for democracy and a number of Latin American countries—Panama, Cuba, Brazil, Guatemala, Nicaragua, Costa Rica, Haiti, Honduras followed suit.

With a view to mobilize all her human and material resources, Britain drew all her colonies over the globe into the war by conscription, in which Indians including the remotest tribesmen like the Nagas, played an important part. About a million Indian soldiers and almost half a million non-combatants were sent to fight wars in Mesopotamia, Iran, France and Turkey. They fought faithfully for the British in the vain hope that the British would grant India the right of self-determination, as the Secretary of State for India had promised in the summer of 1917, "increasing association of Indians in every branch of the administration and gradual development of self-governing institutions with a view to the progressive realisation of responsible government in India as an integral part of the British empire." Little did they know that this war not only cost huge drain on the wealth of India but also in gifts to the British government about £100,000,000 and a good number of them won the acclamation and praise for exemplary bravery and steadfastness in the face of enemies. At the same time, fear of rapid growth of Indian nationalism and its revolt against the British proved well-founded. The Lloyd George government in Britain asked Lord Chelmsford, the Viceroy of India and E. Samuel Montagu, the Secretary of State for India to investigate thoroughly the Indian problems which might be detrimental to the introduction of fundamental changes in the Indian political system. Receiving varying responses from the concerned parties, they, submitted their famous recommendation which is better known as the Montagu-Chelmsford Reforms that the sub-continent with its huge and varied

ethnic population was not yet fit to govern itself independently.

But the British government faced uneasy tasks on the north-east of India. Just prior to the First World War, the Abhors or Adi people in the Siang frontier division of NEFA revolted against the British when the latter meddled with their affairs and frontiers. The Abhors killed Williamson while he was on a visit to Meyong hills in connection with the survey works for the definite scheme of further administration. Abhors' revolt affirmed the impression of Lord Curzon and Lord Minto that the centre of possible trouble on the Indian frontier had shifted from the north-west where the savage Pathans and other tribes lived, to the north-east and their uprising coincided not only with the advance of Chinese soldiers, but also an influx of Chinese settlers, who were swarming the frontiers from Tibet to Yunnan and settling in the Shan states as well on the Mishmi borders.¹ These Chinese incursions in the Mishmi hills in 1910-11 on Tibet frontier forced the British to speed up the Abhor expedition with a view to prevent the Chinese from establishing their influence over the Abhors as well as the Mishmis, and in the bargain advance to the limits of locally recognized 'Tibetan territory.' Unlike the abortive first Abhor expedition of 1893-95, the second Abhor expedition of 1912-1913 was sent to punish persons implicated in the murder of Williamson and to extend British sovereignty. The expedition was successful with the use of the fierce tribes including the Nagas against the Abhors, the Daffas and the various tribes westwards to the Bhutan borders. The Nagas who took active part in it were rewarded with money and presents for gallantry, for killing their own pristine brethren for the British imperialists in search of wealth, security and civilisation. And the Nagas living across the unadministered frontier attacked on the military police in February 1913. But they were suppressed quickly by the forces stationed at Naga Hills.

Thereafter, the First World War came to India. To add strength to their fighting hands, the British government now found it necessary to recruit the eastern Indian tribesmen like the Nagas to combatant and non-combatant units as they were known for their bellicosity. It was compulsory that from every village, a fixed number of young, able-bodied men were recruited to serve anywhere mostly as Labour Corps as directed by the Government. Accordingly in 1916-17, the Government raised about 4,000 Nagas apart from hundreds of

¹ See Hamilton, A., *In Abhor Jungles*, London, 1912.

² *The Government of Eastern Bengal and Assam*, Letter No. 294-C.G., May 16, 1911 and Telegram No. 458, August 1911.

Nagas who were already regular soldiers from the Naga hills of Manipur and Assam and sent them to France along with the other Indians before the war was brought to an end by the Armistice of 11 November 1918. Besides this, thousands of rupees at home were raised as the war loans. Despite their poverty and difficulties, the Nagas gave a good account of themselves by responding fervently to the British call of help and assistance in the hour of need.

But other allied tribes of the Nagas, namely the nomad Kukis, that we have seen from the preceeding chapter inhabiting scatteredly the Naga hills of Manipur, the Naga Hills, the Mikir hills, the North Cachar hills of Assam, the Tripura hills, the Somra tract and the Chin hills revolted against the British efforts of recruiting tribesmen for the war. The causes of the rebellion were deep-rooted. First of all, the Kukis who were the political allies of the Meitei kings were severed after Manipur was completely taken by the British in 1891. This political and administrative change gave rise to repugnance among the free-roaming brave Kukis. Second, realising the dire consequences of free holding of the guns, the British government began to license them by declaring that holding of an unlicensed gun was a penal offence and that it would be confiscated.

The Kukis showed defiance to this order. But the British government seized about 1,195 guns from the Kukis in between 1907 to 1917. It was during this time that British Government's order to raise Labour Corps for France was promulgated, equally binding upon the Kukis also. The Kukis particularly Haokip clans stirred up revolt against the British throughout the Kuki areas of Manipur and Burma, raided in the Manipur valley, Shan villages in the Kabow valley and loyal villages in the Manipur hills and attacked the British troops sent against them. Thus the Kuki rebellion, though confined mostly to Manipur hills and Burma got support from the Mizos and Chins also. The Government took more than a year to crush it by pressing into action as many as 2,400 soldiers of Assam Rifles and 3,000 of the Burmese Military Police before peace was restored in 1919 by a plan of Major A. Vickers, commandant of the 3rd Assam Rifles, and the hostile Kukis were disarmed. It was "the largest series of military operations conducted in this side of India since the old expeditionary days of Generals-Penn Symmonds and Tregear in the late eighties, or the futile Abhor Expedition of 1911-12, eclipsing them all in casualties and arduousness of active service." But very little was known to the public of these operations; one or two Calcutta papers only published short and erroneous accounts...generally belittling a long, hard show carried through

eventually to a successful issue by the combined Military Police Forces of Assam and Burma.”¹

But these confrontations impelled the British government to abandon the idea of raising men for Labour Corps from among the other wild Naga tribes of the eastern region where their imaginary sovereignty ran, unattended by actual administrative control, till India became independent in 1947. Second, the Somra tract where the Nagas and Kukis were, was included in the Province of Burma on 11 December 1917 as a result of the contagion of the Kuki rebellion and subsequent punitive military operations against them.

The impact of the First World War upon the Nagas, it seems, was precious little except that they were put in 1921 into “Backward Tracts” of India by the Governor-General, acting under the section 52 (2) of the Government of India Act, 1919 which introduced some political reforms, modelled to some extent, on the Congress-League ‘Lucknow Pact’ of 1916. Under this Act, neither the Central nor the Provincial legislature in effect, should have power to make laws applicable to these “Tracts”, but the Governor-General or Provincial Governor in Council might direct that any act of the provincial legislature should apply to that tract, subject to such exceptions as he expressly thought fit. Proposals for expenditure in that tract needed not to be submitted to the vote of the legislative assembly or a Provincial legislature. No question could be asked about the tract, be discussed in the legislative assembly or in the Provincial legislature. Before this Montagu-Chemsford Reforms Act, these “Backward Tracts” were given special treatment by carving out “scheduled districts” under the India Act XIV of 1874. Accordingly, they were subjected to special laws which prescribed simple forms of judicial and administrative procedure. So the Government of India Act 1919 had treated the Nagas in the same line of other backward tracts, without any speciality to be called for. But, while the hill tribes of Assam were constitutionally a part of Assam, the Government of Assam was denied a direct voice in the administration and governance of the Hills.

The indirect influence of World War I was tremendous. The Nagas who went to France brought back horrified accounts as to how the great civilised nations fought for their ends and interests while Nagas were condemned as barbarous for their head-hunting wars. Second, the intercourse among the different Nagas of different tribes in France, far from their homes fostered mutual love, service and a

¹ Shakespeare, *History of the Assam Rifles*, London, 1929, p. 235.

sense of political unity which manifested itself in their verbal resolution that on return to their land they would work for friendship and unity among themselves and give up their nasty weaknesses like head-hunting and village feud. It was this spirit which spearheaded an upsurge of the Naga nationalist movement.

MYTH OF RANI GAIDILIU

After thousands of the Nagas returned from France and elsewhere, having fought for the Allies, a Naga Club was opened under official patronage, with the august objective of promoting the interests of the Nagas. This Club among other things, presented a memorandum to the Simon Commission and pressed for the exclusion of the Naga areas from the purview of proposed reforms and demanded that they should be left alone to decide their future for themselves whenever the British decided to quit India. On the other hand, from 1929 to 1933, a politically worthy, but religiously more significant movement that we may call the Naga renaissance or religious nationalism, took place in the Naga-inhabited frontiers along Manipur, Naga Hills, North Cachar and Mikir Hills in Assam where Zemai, Liangmai and Rongmai Nagas live. This movement—a sort of a synthesis of animism and Hinduism involving human sacrifice but infidel contempt for Christianity called exclusively “Haraka Cult” was spreading like wild fire among these Naga tribes. Soon it won over numerous followers, set against the loyal subjects of the British government as also of their vassals and compelled others to convert themselves to it to oppose Christianity and to denounce the British empire as well as the Kuki intruders from the south-west and north-east as they were turned by the Mizos in the Mizo hills and by the Suktes in Chin Hills of Burma. But, it was completely put down in 1933. Strangely enough, this movement coincided with Gandhi’s disobedience movement in the other parts of India.

The genesis of the movement has to be traced from Jadunang, a Rongmai Naga of Pulton (Kambiron) village in Tamenglong subdivision of Manipur. Born in early some 1900 Jadunang, was an ordinary soldier enlisted in the First World War and posted to Mesopotamia. On his return he began to preach in the early 1925 onwards about the ‘Kingdom of God’ conceived in his vision in which everyone would be treated as equal in human freedom, liberty, rights and duties. In the other words, he revived the superstitious belief of the Nagas that there was a bygone time when men lived with plenty of food without much work,

but in equality and freedom and relatively it was the age that Adam and Eve were carelessly placed by God in Eden Garden before Lucifer came in and sinned them. Further, he aroused the ancient Naga prophecy that one day, their alien ruler would be driven from the hills and all who eat from the wooden platters, obviously referring to the Nagas and the allied tribes, would become self-governed under a Naga king. He assumed himself to be the Messiah king and declared an independent Naga kingdom in an aggressive, warlike form as that would take the powerful and patriotic way as the only viable alternative to their old and underdeveloped traditional culture. He proved himself to have ruling mystic qualities by performing magical tricks like drawing water from the handle of his sword, and whosoever drank that water would receive the blessing of god. He ordered his people to drink that sacred water and to make human and mithun sacrifice to the god—Tengwa, and in turn god would restore them their lost kingdom. Surprisingly, he kept two pet pythons also under the plinth of his house to impress and overawe the people with his supernatural powers.

Jadunang won in no time the allegiance of his own people in Manipur state, the Naga Hills and North Cachar and Mikir Hills and consolidated his kingdom. Soon he began to nurse the plans of liberating the people from the British control and sent his followers known as Khampais to all directions to preach about liberation movement. His cousin, Gaidiliu was made priestess and sent to North Cachar Hills where she was warmly received by her people there. And their followers indulged in kidnapping and murdering the plains people for sacrifice to god also, while the Burmese led by Saya San uprose against the British rule in Burma in 1930. The four Manipuri betal-leaf traders who were staying at a dak bungalow on their way to Silchar were killed, their heads cut off and the skulls broken into small fragments for ritual distribution among his disciples in order to display conquest and sacrifice to deity. Finding this movement dangerous to the British Indian empire, the Government resolutely decided to nip it in the bud. Troops were sent to capture Jadunang and his followers from Manipur through the routes from North Cachar and Naga Hills. Jadunang was caught and hanged on 29 August 1931 at Imphal on the charge of making human sacrifice of the traders to pacify his god after he was tried contemptuously; the initial temple, he built was destroyed and his pythons were shot dead on the spot. But the revolt had been a brave show of defiance to the British authority.

Even after his execution, the spirit of the movement had not

damped down. The gallant Gaidiliu took over the leadership and continued the freedom activities in the hills in mysterious scale. The details of her early life were obscure, however supposed to be born on 26 January 1915 at Langklao village, Temenglong area. She was the third daughter of her parents-Lottbonang and Kalotlenliu of the Pamri clan of Rongmai tribe. At thirteen years of age, she became associated with Jadunang in this movement with an aim to revive the decadent animism, to drive the British out from Naga soil and to achieve freedom. The several attempts to arrest her failed for sometimes as the troops were allured that she appeared in different places simultaneously but actually she moved from place to place under the protection of her disciples. A reward of Rs 500 was also announced for supplying the information of her whereabouts. Meanwhile, her people refused to pay any tax to the Government and to accept compulsory labour portorage to the officials. Collective fines amounting to Rs. 2,220 were imposed. Troops were sent to Zelian-grong territory from all directions. Patrols went out constantly and outposts were set at strategic points, and a marriage proposal was made by a handsome man deputed by the Political Agent in order to arrest her in the promise that she would be absolved of all criminal charges if she agreed to the marriage. At last she was arrested in early 1933, tried and sentenced her to life imprisonment for starting such a heinous cult and carrying out insurrection against the British government, although it did not wholly succeed in suppressing the ideology on which it was built. During her imprisonment in the Assam jail, she was given a modified form of Borstal treatment.'

Whatever might have been her teachings, Gaidiliu's heroism had moved veteran nationalist Jawaharlal Nehru who was born in a family at Allahabad where political activity for India's freedom centred around his father, Motilal Nehru and who was educated in England, practiced law for sometimes and joined the Congress to work for the India's freedom. He gave her the title Rani for she put up the flag of independence in the far-flung hills of eastern India. He made strenuous efforts to know about her and to enlist her into Congress and in this he sought the assistance of Lady Nancy Astor who wrote to him as follows:

"Dear Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru, You will remember that last summer you spoke to me about the case of Gaidiliu, the girl of the Naga clan who was imprisoned in 1933, in connection with the murder of some Manipur travellers in 1930. I have had a certain amount

¹ See Rani Gaidiliu's Memorandum submitted to the Prime Minister, Mrs. Indira Gandhi on August 18, 1972.

of correspondence with the India Office about her case, and they have made some investigations and as a result, sent me good deal of detailed information...It is added that the movement among the Nagas has not yet died down, and would break if she were released, and that she is at present considered a potent source of danger to the peace of Manipur state and the province of Assam...In answer to my representations asking of, for such a young girl, constructive reformatory treatment would not be more beneficial in its effects than imprisonment...I have been informed that a modified form of Borstal treatment with facilities for education, is adopted in the Assam jail...I do hope that some good will come out of my efforts, though I am sorry that the business has taken so long."

Then at his helplessness, Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru wrote: "In Sylhet also, many Nagas from the surrounding hills came to visit me with greetings and gifts. And from them and others I heard a story which India ought to know and cherish. It was the story of a young woman of their tribe belonging to the Kabui clan in the Naga hills. She was of the priestly class and she had the unique opportunity among her people to receive some education in a mission school, where she reached the ninth or tenth class. Gaidiliu was her name and she was about nineteen, six years ago when civil disobedience blazed over the length and breadth of India. News of Gandhi and the Congress reached her in her hill abode and found an echo in her heart. She dreamed of freedom for her people and an ending of the galling restrictions they suffered from, and she raised the banner of independence and called her people to rally round it. Perhaps she thought, rather prematurely, that the British Empire was fading out. But that Empire still functioned effectively and aggressively and it took vengeance on her and her people. Many villages were burnt and destroyed and this heroic girl was captured and sentenced to transportation for life. And now she lies in some prison in Assam, wasting her bright young womanhood in dark cells and solitude. Six years she has been there. What torment and suppression of spirit they have brought to her, who in the pride of her youth dared to challenge an empire! She can roam no more in the hill country through the forest glades, or sing in the fresh crisp air of the mountains. This wild young thing sits cabined in the darkness, with a few yards, may be, of space in the daytime, eating her fiery heart in desolation and confinement. And India does not even know of this brave child of her hills, with the free spirit of the mountains in her. But her own people remember their *Gaidiliu*, the *Rani* and think of her with love and pride. And a day will come when India also will remember her and cherish her,

and bring her out of her prison cell.

"But our so-called provincial autonomy will not help in bringing about this release. More is needed. For the Excluded Areas are outside the ken of our provincial ministries, and, strange to say, they are even more cut off from us now than they were before the advent of "provincial autonomy." Even questions about Gaidiliu were not allowed to be put in the Assam assembly. So we progress to Swaraj (self-government) through the Government of India Act, 1935.

"Darkness had set in and my tour was approaching its appointed end. We reached Habiganj late in the evening, and after the meeting there hurried on to Shaistaganj to catch our train. The crescent moon hung over the horizon, with its silvery brightness gone and looking gloomy and yellow. I thought of the past twelve days with all their quick movement and crowds and enthusiasm, and it all seemed like a dream that was over. And I thought of *Gaidiliu, the Rani* sitting in her prison cell. What thoughts were hers, what regrets, what dreams?"¹

SIMON COMMISSION AND THE NAGAS

The reforms embodied in the Government of India Act 1919, could not appease the popular sentiments as a result of which the British India was passing through a state of turmoil and rebellion in the 1920s. The Indian National Congress under the leadership of Mahatma Gandhi was fighting tooth and nail to achieve Swaraj for Indians including Muslims, by methods of non-violence, truth, love and non-co-operation, even though Jawaharlal Nehru, in the beginning did advocate revolutionary means such as direct action and violence rather in the Machiavellian and Marxian sense for the attainment of complete independence and for economic build-up to modernise India like other industrialised countries of the world. On the opposite hand, a product of western education and completely unorthodox in view, Mr. M. A. Jinnah became undisputed leader of Muslim League and raised the demand for a separate homeland for Muslims for he feared the loss of Muslim identity in a Hindu majority India, in complete contrast to Gandhi's appeal of communal harmony. Seeing this, the Baldwin government appointed a Statutory Commission consisting exclusively six English members of Parliament under the chairmanship of Sir John Simon (1873-1954) in November 1927 to study the Indian situation for future policy. The Commission visited India twice and was received by unwelcoming demonstrations, the reason being that there was not even one Indian member in the Commission and

¹ J. Nehru, *Unity of India*, London, 1948, pp. 187-8.

its objectives were vague and hazy. All Indians took it as an insult and protested that the future of their country should not be decided entirely by the alien rulers without their knowledge. But the Commission was successful in a way that owing to its report, the Government of India Act, 1935 came up and continued to work till 1947.

Meanwhile, the Nagas were moving in a completely different direction and atmosphere. They were kept isolated from the purview and contact of the political movement sweeping the rest of India, by scrupulous efforts of the British government so much so that their affairs and any resultant discussions on them were closed at the pale of the provincial legislature for a number of unspecified reasons. Therefore, the other parts of India hardly knew what was going on in the Naga hills. However, the spirit of nationalism was slowly stirring in the Nagaland also. And the enlightened Nagas got themselves afresh the memory of their freedom and felt the need to have an organization for voicing their grievances as well as for conveying their aspirations to the Government. It led to, as has been said earlier, the establishment of the Naga Club in Kohima and Mokokchung. The members of the Club were important village headmen, government officials and educated persons. The purpose of the Club in its inception was social rather than political in character, almost similar to the Indian National Congress founded by A.O. Hume in 1885. It also had to assist the district government in the social and administrative matters of the Nagas. But exactly like the Congress, it developed a political outlook and raised its will against the British imperialism in a peaceful and loyal manner. The members of the Statutory Commission, namely John Simon, Clement Attlee and E. Cadogan visited Kohima on the 10 January 1929 and were received warmly by the Nagas with their traditional presents.

A memorandum manifesting their unity of thought and action was given to the Commission, in which the Nagas demanded the return of their independence. The memorandum said: "We, the undersigned Nagas of the Naga Club at Kohima, who are the only persons at present to voice for our people, have heard with great regret that our Naga hills were included within the Reformed Scheme of India without our knowledge, but as the administration of our hills continued to be in the hands of the British officers we did not consider it necessary to raise any protest in the past. We now learn that you have come to India as representatives of the British government to enquire into the working of the system of government and the growth of education and we beg to submit below our views with the prayer that our hills may be withdrawn from the Reformed Scheme

and placed outside the reforms but directly under the British government. We never asked for any reforms, and we do not wish for any reforms.

“Before the British government conquered our country in 1879-1880, we were living in a state of intermittent warfare with the Assamese of the Assam valley to the north-west and the Manipuris to the south of our country. They never conquered us, nor were we ever subjected to their rule. On the other hand, we were always a terror to these plains people. Our country within the administered area consists of more than 8 major tribes, quite different from one another in languages which cannot be understood by each other, and there are more tribes outside the administered area which are not known at present. We have no unity among us and it is only the British government that is holding us together now.

“Our education at present is poor. The occupation of our country by the British government being so recent as 1880, we have had no chance or opportunity to improve in education, and though we can boast of two or three graduates of an Indian University in our country, we have not got one yet who is able to represent all our different tribes or master our languages, much less one to represent us in any council of a province. Moreover, our population numbering 102,000 is very small in comparison with the plains districts in the Province (Assam), and any representation that may be allotted to us in the council will be negligible and will have no weight whatsoever. Our languages are quite different from those of the plains, and we have no social affinities with either Hindus or Muslims. We are looked down upon by the one for our ‘beef’ and by the other for our ‘pork’ and by both for our want of education which is not due to any fault of ours.

“Our country is poor and it does not pay for its administration. Therefore, if it is continued to be placed under Reformed Scheme, we are afraid that new and heavy taxes will have to be imposed upon us, and when we cannot pay, then all our lands will have to be sold, and in the long run we shall have no share in the land of our birth, and life will not be worth living then. Though our land at present is within the British territory, Government has always recognised our private rights in it, but if we are forced to enter the council all these rights may be extinguished by the unsympathetic council, the majority of whose members is sure to belong to the districts. We also much fear the introduction of foreign laws and customs to supersede our own customary laws which we now enjoy.

“For the above reasons, we pray that the British government will

continue to safeguard our rights against all encroachments from other people who are more advanced than we, by withdrawing our country from the Reformed Scheme and placing it directly under its own protection. If the British government, however, wants to throw us away, we pray that we should not be thrust to the mercy of the people who could never have conquered us themselves, and to whom we were never subjected; but to leave us alone to determine for ourselves as in ancient times. We claim (not only the members of the Naga Club) to represent all those tribes to which we belong : viz., Angamis, Kachas, Kukis, Semas, Lothas, Rengmas, etc.”

This memorandum asking for the exclusion of Nagaland from the proposed reforms, however precise in presentation, contained considerable political significance. It emphatically pointed out the obvious desire of the Nagas for the restoration of their independence that the British had snatched from them.

The Simon Commission's report, with its recommendations considered to be “the complete study of the Indian Problems” which was submitted in 1930 did not set out Nagas for a separate treatment, but took them in the same line as the other backward tribes of India except as an expression of literary beauty. “No description”, says the report, “can convey to the reader the striking impression produced by these gatherings, or the difficulty of fitting the needs of such people into a constitutional scheme. These races must be among the most picturesque in the world, and until their energies are sapped by contact with civilization they remain among the most light-hearted and virile.”¹ Then, the Commission's report on the backward tribes phrased as “Backward Tribes” by 1919 Act was discussed in the British Parliament and Indian legislature that we will show here.

First of all, the members of the Commission objected to the use of the word ‘backward’ as Sir John Simon called it ‘nauseating’.

Cadogan said in the House of Commons in May 1935 that, “It is true that some of these tribesmen eat food which, if you or I eat, would give us ptomaine poisoning at once, but you and I have no right to say that because a third person can digest food which we cannot digest, that person is, therefore, backward. It might be that his inside had reached a more advanced state of evolution than yours or mine, but it is a mistake to imagine, and I am speaking seriously that, because their customs are different from ours, they are backward in every sense.” Then coming particularly to the Nagas, he added, “I suppose, I am one of the few honourable members of this

¹ *Report of the Indian Statutory Commission*, V. 1, H.M.S.O., London, 1930, p. 75.

House who have had conversation with the head-hunters of Kohima in their own jungle. These little head-hunters met us and had a palaver. Presumably the District Commissioner had informed the tribal chieftain that my head was of no intrinsic value as we evinced no disposition to transfer it from my shoulder to his head-hunter's basket which was slung over his back and was, I think, the only garment he affected. I am telling this to the Committee in order to prove that these little tribesmen are more sophisticated in their own particular way than perhaps the Committee may imagine. They have a very shrewd suspicion that something is being done to take away from them their immemorial rights and customs."

So another appellation was coined—"excluded areas" instead of 'backward tracts' which were divided into "excluded" and "partially excluded" according to the degree and extent of backwardness and administrative vantage. The reasons for exclusion were that since the tribal people had not reached such a stage to go with the advanced people in the country, they needed protection from the Government although many of them mixed with the other plains people for which they were put into classified, partially excluded areas. The Commission's Report says, "the stage of development reached by the inhabitants of these areas prevents the possibility of applying to them methods of representation adopted elsewhere. They do not ask for self-determination, but for security of land tenure, freedom in the pursuit of their traditional methods of livelihood, and the reasonable exercise of their ancestral customs. Their contentment does not depend so much on rapid political advance as on experienced and sympathetic handling, and on protection from economic subjugation by their neighbours." Accordingly, the excluded and partially excluded areas were placed outside the competence of the provincial and federal legislatures. Provincial Governor was vested with discretion in the administration of excluded areas including the Naga Hills whereas the Minister subject to the Governor with his individual judgement, looked after the partially excluded areas. The Commission further recommended that "the responsibility of Parliament for the backward tracts will not be discharged merely by securing to them protection from exploitation and by preventing those outbreaks which have from time to time occurred within their borders. The principal duty of the administration is to educate these people to stand on their own feet. It is too large a task to be left to the single-handed efforts of (Christian) missionary societies or of individual officials. Co-ordination of activity and adequate funds are principally required. The typical backward tract is a deficit area,

and no provincial legislature is likely to possess either the will or the means to devote special attention to its particular requirements. Expenditure in the tracts does not benefit the areas from which elected representatives are returned. Moreover, the most extensive tracts fall within the poorest provinces. Only if responsibility for the backward tracts is entrusted to the Centre, does it appear likely that it will be adequately discharged.

However, the concept and extent of the exclusive arrangements was subject to considerable criticism in Parliament and in India. The Indian legislature, very much aroused by some of the speeches in the House of Commons, made strong protests against such measures. Sir Winston Churchill, who claimed in the House to be himself 'an anthropologist in his own way', strongly criticised the principle of exclusion on the grounds that it was altogether inconsistent to put forward a Bill whereby the 'government of a mighty land' and such subjects as irrigation, police, revenue and so forth could be handed over to 'the new Indian bodies' who were expected to discharge their functions with perfect security in regard to them but were apparently incompetent to fulfil such a comparatively minor duty as the administration of the primitive tribes. The dangers of isolation of these people were stressed in temporary exclusion. Earl Winterton, for instance, said, "I believe far more in assimilation than in isolation. I do not think you want to turn areas into modern whipsnapes where you have picturesque survivals and where Englishmen are able to go out and sway. This is a most interesting ethnological race of people divided by 500 or 1,000 years from the rest of India." R.A. Butler, the then Under Secretary of State for India, said: "While we do not, for a moment, deny the importance of special measures for these areas, if we have to choose between assimilation and segregation, we go on as before with assimilation. Segregation, we feel, may not in every case meet the proper desires and needs of such areas. Let us look to the future. If at this moment we decide on a ring fence policy and segregate as many areas as we can, we put off to a later date the chance of assimilating the backward areas in the general polity of India."

Justifying the excluded scheme, the Secretary of State for India said that "these backward people will only be victimised if we try to impose on them institutions which, while they may be suitable for more advanced civilization, will do nothing but lead to their exploitation. We realise the great danger of imposing upon them anything in the nature of representative government as we understand it. We realise the great danger of imposing upon them,

which, while they may be admirable for civilized communities, are extremely dangerous and injurious to these backward races.' He further added that it would be wrong to think that it was only English administrators who really knew about the tribal areas. "Let me say," he declared, "in justice to many distinguished India administrators, that in recent years there had been developed a school of Indian administrators who had specially studied their problems." As a whole, the majority of the House of Commons favoured the exclusion scheme. Some speeches were undoubtedly quite provocative: 'The only chance for these people is to protect themselves from civilization which will destroy them and for that purpose, I believe, British control is the best.' 'It is not fair to put these tribes into the unrestricted hands of people whose object must be to exploit their labour and to sell them cheap goods at prices they are not worth.' "They must not," declared Colonel Wedgewood, "be converted from good Nagas or whatever they are into bad Hindus." Prominent Indian politicians 'have never displayed the slightest interest in this subject,' as compared with 'Europeans who had a natural and strong sympathy with these people'. 'We are treating these backward tribes as though they were chattels who could be handed over either to the Indians or the Princes.'

'If they were taken away from direct British rule, their land would be alienated, and they would be recruited for the tea plantations and elsewhere'.

So, as a result of the report and recommendations of the Commission and subsequent debates of the House of Commons and events in India, the Government of India Act was passed in 1935. A provision for excluded areas and partially excluded areas, the full text of which given below, was made in Articles 91 and 92: "In this Act the expressions "excluded area" and "partially excluded area" mean respectively such areas as His Majesty may by Order in Council declare to be excluded areas or partially excluded areas.

"The Secretary of State shall lay the draft of the Order which it is proposed to recommend His Majesty to make under this sub-section before Parliament within six months from the passing of this Act.

"His Majesty may at any time by Order in Council direct that the whole or any specified part of an excluded area shall become, or become part of, a partially excluded area; direct that the whole or any specified part of a partially excluded area shall cease to be a partially excluded area or a part of such an area; alter, but only by way of rectification of boundaries, any excluded or partially excluded area; on any alteration of the boundaries of a province, or the

creation of a new province, declare any territory not previously included in any province to be, or to form part of an excluded area or a partially excluded area, and any such Order may contain such incidental and consequential provisions as appear to His Majesty to be necessary and proper, but save as aforesaid the Order in Council made under sub-section (1) of this section shall not be varied by any subsequent Order.

“Administration of Excluded and Partially Excluded Areas:

(1) The executive authority of a province extends to excluded and partially excluded areas therein, but, notwithstanding anything in this Act, no Act of the Federal legislature or of the Provincial legislature, shall apply to an excluded area or a partially excluded area, unless the Governor by public notification so directs; and the Governor in giving such a direction with respect to any Act may direct that the Act shall in its application to the area, or to any specified part thereof, have effect subject to such exceptions or modifications as he thinks fit. (2) The Governor may make regulations for the peace and good government of any area in a province which is for the time being an excluded area, or a partially excluded area, and any regulations so made may repeal or amend any Act of the Federal legislature or of the Provincial legislature, or any existing Indian law which is for the time being applicable to the area in question.

“Regulation made under this sub-section shall be submitted forthwith to the Governor-General and until assented to by him in his discretion shall have no effect, and the provisions of this part of this Act with respect to the power of His Majesty to disallow Acts shall apply in relation to any such regulations assented to by the Governor-General as they apply in relation to Acts of a Provincial legislature assented to by him.

“(3) The Governor shall, as respects any area in a province which is for the time being an excluded area, exercise his functions in his discretion.”¹

The Government of India Order of 3 March 1936 states: “whereas by sub-section (i) of section ninety-one of the Government of India Act, 1935 (hereafter in this Order referred to as “the Act”), His Majesty in Council is empowered to declare what areas are to be excluded areas and partially excluded areas within the meaning of the Act.”

¹ *The Government of India Act, 1935* (as amended upto 15th August, 1943) Delhi, 1945. p. 32-33.

Accordingly, the excluded areas declared by the Government of India were *Laccadive Islands including Minicoy and Amindivi Islands* in Madras, *the Chittagong Hill tracts* in Bengal, *Spiti and Lahaul in the Kangra district* in Punjab, *the North-East Frontier, (Sadiya, Balipara and Lakhimpur) tracts, the Naga Hills district, the Lushai Hills district, the North Cachar Hills sub-division of the Cachar district* in Assam, and *Upper Tanawal in the Hazara District* in the North-West Frontier Province. And the partially excluded areas of north-east India were the *Garo Hills district, The Mikir Hills* (In the Nowgong and Sibsagar districts), *the British portion of the Khasi and Jaintia Hills district, other than the Shillong Municipality and Cantonment.*

Thus, we have seen that the Government made concessions in matter of the safety of the interests of the backward tribes under the cardinal principles of the Government of India Act, 1935. The excluded areas would be administered at the Governor's discretion, while in partially excluded areas he would be responsible for protecting the interests of the aborigines and it was therefore desirable, especially as the Act had provision only for transforming an excluded area into a partially excluded area and for merging a partially excluded area into a province, to mark out as many areas as possible for such protection. The weight of the contention was serious, and the Governmental argument that it was difficult to delimit areas owing to the scattered condition of the aboriginal tribes, and that assimilation was to be aimed at, failed to carry much conviction. Finally it was decided to accept neither the government's brief schedule nor the longer one proposed in lieu, but to determine the areas by Order in Council based on a White Paper, giving the relevant facts, to be laid before the House.

In regard to these areas, no federal or provincial Act was applied save under notification by the Governor, who might provide for its modification or exceptions in its application. Moreover, with the subsequent assent of the Governor-General in his discretion, he made regulations for the peace and good government of any area and repeal or modify any federal, provincial or other law applicable thereto. The regulation might be disallowed by the Crown. The executive power of the province extended to such areas, but in the case of excluded areas, should be exercised by the Governor in his discretion. Such policy of exclusion followed the British isolating tribal areas from the greater Hindu and Muslim communities to the British desire of "divide and rule" was loudly condemned by the Indian Nationalist Congress. Nevertheless, this administrative arrangement came into force in April 1937 and continued with only

minor modifications till 1947, although the excluded and partially excluded communities were left more or less to administer themselves.

CROWN COLONY PLAN

When the world was in throes of devastating war during the early 1940s, India was passing through a period of chaos and turbulence. The British India under the Churchill government had embarked on war with the object of holding on the tottering British empire. The Indians under the leadership of Congress and of Muslim League were determined to put an end to the British rule by all means. They raised undeterrent slogan "do or die" in order to restore their lost sovereignty. Again, when the Japanese forces and the Indian National Army of Netaji Subhash Chandra Bose threatened the British Indian empire, the British realised that they could no longer remain in India. But they still desired to extend their imperialism wherever it was found possible of a chievement.

Sir Robert Reid, Governor of Assam from 1937 to May 1942 was one of the exponents of such concept. Sir Reid genuinely had a great sympathy and love for eastern hill tribes of India and the Upper Burma. He knew the politics between Hindus and Muslims in the sub-continent and saw the ethnical and cultural differences between the tribal peoples there and the rest of the British India and Burma. Therefore, he proposed a Crown colony comprising the Naga Hills, the area bounded by the North-East Frontier Agency, the Chittagong Hill tracts of E. Bengal and Burma adjoining the Naga area inhabited more or less by the same racial groups. He saw it was possible to create a nation out of congeries of tribes under the British guide. As such, in his confidential report, he said: "We have no right to allow this great body of non-Indian animists and Christians to be drawn into the struggle between Hindus and Muslims, which is now and will be in the future, with ever-increasing intensity, the dominating feature of politics in India proper...They cannot be left to Indian political leaders with neither knowledge, interest nor feeling for the areas. In any case, if my main premise of separation from India is accepted, their intervention could scarcely arise...Personally, I am in favour of Dr. Hutton's idea of a north-east province or agency embracing all the hill fringe from Lushai (or Lakher) land on the south right round to the Balipara Frontier tract on the north, embracing on the way the Chittagong Hill tracts of Bengal and the Nagas and Chins of Burma and perhaps the Shan States too. I would put this under a Chief Commissioner and he, in turn, would, I imagine, have to be divorced (as in Burma) from the control of the Government of India

(presumably a federal body by then) and put perhaps under some appropriate department at Whitehall ..”

Sir Robert Reid’s recommendation enlisted largely the support of several other British administrators in these areas, among whom were Dr. J.H. Hutton, Commissioner for the Naga Hills, N.E. Parrey, Superintendent of the Lushai Hills and J.P. Mills, Adviser to the Assam Governor on Tribal Affairs. Sir Reginald Coupland, a British constitutional expert, also reportedly proposed in 1946 a rather similar plan that the tribal areas of Assam and Burma be constituted into a Crown colony under the British rule or that the Governments of India and Burma might have a treaty with Britain and that each should take the share of responsibility for the areas.

“There is,” Coupland writes, “one major area which seems to call for special treatment, the hill tracts on the eastern frontier of Assam. They adjoin similar hill tracts on the north-west frontier of Burma. The inhabitants of both areas are alike in race and culture. They are not Indians or Burmans, but of Mongol stock. In no sense do they belong to the Indian or Burman ‘nation’. They constitute a single problem. The relations of one area with the future free India will be similar to those of the other area with the future free Burma. The neighbourhood of both to China demands common frontier policy. These considerations have inspired a suggestion that the two areas might be united into a single territory, the administration of which would be separated in some way from the Governments of India and Burma. Since the security and stability of this frontier zone are of the highest importance to both the countries, it seems possible that India and Burma might welcome some special arrangement. It has been suggested that the new Government of India might conclude a treaty with the British government for provision of British assistance for the time being in the external defence of India. The new Government of Burma might wish to do the same. In that event, might not the administration of this area on both sides of the frontier be associated with a joint system of defence?”

“Whether some such treatment of the hill tracts of Assam were practicable or desirable or not, it clearly could not be applied to the other ‘excluded’ areas. Clearly these areas must be fitted into the fabric of the Indian constitution, and such ‘safeguards’ as are required for their protection, must be found in the law of the land. But it is not only protection they need. Like most of the British Crown colonies, they need money for extension of social services. Mainly for that reason the authors of the Simon Report recommended that, the

control of them should be vested in the Centre"¹.

Keeping in mind the great service of the Nagas to the British in different ways, but ignoring to visualise what Gandhi and his lieutenant Pandit Nehru were fighting for India including the Nagas, the British government sanctioned out a notion of Crown colony or Trust territory in a broad way by forming a kind of confederation comprising the Naga Hills, other Assam Hills, NEFA and Upper Burma with a view to eventual independence. When such a British scheme was known to the Nagas, they (Nagas) opposed it vehemently since they had no affection for any kind of British imperialism and colonialism in their land. In this context, they proved themselves as strong as Hindu Congressmen and League Muslims in insisting that the moment the British would go from India, it too would have to leave Nagaland, and they should receive back their sovereignty which the British had kept in bondage for years after the Nagas were defeated in the famous Naga war of independence in 1879-80. Taking into account the obstinacy and hostile attitude of the Nagas to the two official plans namely the so-called Reid and Coupland or any other sort which Sir Robert himself also did not sedulously work for, however it developed consciously or unconsciously a fragment encouraging tribal separatism, precisely to the extent of calling them separate from most of the plains people. But his initiative, later on, provided an apple of discord between the Nagas and the Government of India.

The British government led by Labour Party came to the opinion that this was, of course, unacceptable to the Indian and Burmese nationalist opinion, and did not give any substantial reply of the memoranda submitted by the Nagas. What was the reply indirectly was that of, from the Governor of Assam, Sir Andrew Clow who said that the Naga had neither population nor the resources that a modern state should need to sustain its sovereignty. Ultimately deciding to quit India once for all without any remnants of their empire, the British had transferred the sovereignty to India, Pakistan in 1947, and Burma in 1948. But the vexing separatist relics of the British imperialism still remained in the frontiers of India and Burma and sprawled thinly along with the demand of the extremist Nagas that their sovereignty was passed by the British to India and Burma that should in turn, be returned to them, the consequence of which we will study in the following chapters.

¹ *The Future of India*, London, 1943. pp. 164-5.

NAGAS IN THE SECOND WORLD WAR

The humiliation foisted by the victors of the World War I upon the defeated nations by the Treaty of Versailles, the successive crises, and the struggles of subjected nations were the main causes that led to the Second World War when the Nazi Germany under the dictatorship of Hitler overran Poland on 1 September 1939, and subsequent declaration of war by Britain and France. Italy joined on the German side. Succeeding over Denmark, Norway, Netherlands, Belgium and France, Germany invaded Yugoslavia, Greece and Russia in 1941. In Asia, the Emperor Tojo's ambition set active for Asiatic expansion and accordingly Japan attacked Pearl Harbour, a U.S. naval base in Hawaii on 7 December 1941. It forced the American President Roosevelt to declare war. By May 1942, Japan had overrun Chiang Kai-shek China, the French Indo-China, British Burma, the Dutch East Indies, and several U. S. possessions—Wake, Guam, the Philippines, and several of the outer Aleutian Islands. Thus the Axis powers at their zenith controlled most of Europe, South-East Asia, Western Pacific and a large part of Africa.

But the Japanese occupation of Burma and their imminent invasion in India gave serious consequences, one of which that had fallen upon the Nagas was that the British government raised forced labour from the villages on the basis of clans for the purpose of widening of vital Dimapur-Imphal road linking with the Assam-Bengal railway and a number of other road-building works for the smooth mobility of the Allied troops. Accordingly, thousands of Nagas were employed as forced workers along with labourers from other parts of India. In the beginning, most of the Naga road workers suffered and died of different diseases arising from the effects of the dangerous and unhygienic conditions prevailing there with sufficient food and appropriate medical supplies not forthcoming in time due to transport difficulties. The other disturbances out of the whirl of the war in Burma coincided with the exodus of fear-ridden Indian refugees and the retreat of the Burma Army from Burma towards India in search of safety through the Naga Hills. The conditions of the refugees streaming on the Dimapur-Imphal road were horrible and pathetic. Many refugees had not carried food, money and clothes, the women and children were desperately exhausted, dusty or ill, suffered from strains of malaria, parasites, dysentery, cholera and small-pox mostly crawled miserably over the earth and died day and night in their long trudge from Rangoon, Pegu or Towngoo; children were thrown by their parents in woe of their helplessness and cry upon God who in Nietzsche's term dead there; notwithstanding, some

poor merciless Nagas sometimes snatched their food and removed clothes from the dying bodies. This flight of refugees in the Naga Hills and Manipur brought the news of the coming of war and varied diseases in its wake.

However, the tide of war began to turn against the Axis powers when the Allied powers put blood, toil, tears and sweat to task. The Japanese advance was stopped with the battles of the Coral Sea. The Allied offensives began on all fronts. Japan was going on in the contest against Allies.

Meanwhile, another dimension was added to the fighting strength of the shaken Japanese by the Indian extremist nationalists led by Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose, a western educated, robust Bengali patriot, who escaped *incognito* from India to Germany (1941) with a single, strong determination to liberate India from the British rule with his favourite slogan: "Give me blood and I promise you freedom". Aided by the Axis, he formed an Indian National Army (5 July 1943) composed of thousands of Indians most of whom were war prisoners of Japanese in Singapore and started upon his march on Delhi ('Delhi Chalho'). On September 1943 General Kawabe, Japanese Commander-in-Chief in Burma and Subhas Chandra Bose, the Supreme Commander of the INA decided to launch a determined attack on the Chin Hills, Manipur and Naga Hills. General Mutaguchi with his Senior Commanders of the Fifteenth Army worked out, in no time, the detailed plans for the assault from different directions of the 15, 31 and 23 Divisions and a division of INA, consisting of 55,000 troops in all crossed the Chindwin river on 6 March 1944 and struck out across the mountains and jungles of Naga Hills and Manipur. The main part of 33 Division commanded by Lieutenant General Yanagida, a talented and highly intelligent man, attacked the 17th Division on the British forces commanded by General Scoones (4th Corps) at Tiddim road from the south. Simultaneously, a strong detachment from 33 Division under Major General Jamamoto cut off British outposts holding the Chin Hills around Tiddim and Fort White and advanced towards Tammu-Palel road from the south-east. A week later, 15 and 31 Divisions under Lieutenant Generals, Yamauchi and Sato respectively advanced towards Imphal and Kohima across the rugged mountain trails to overcome the Allied forces there.

¹ It is to note that Congress, from the beginning of the war, subscribed to the Allies with the reservation to safeguard Indian interests and was opposed to the Fascist and Nazist ideologies. It stood for the liberation of India by Gandhian means of truth and non-violence.

However, before the Japanese inroads and incursions, the British and Indian war preparations had been made completely ready. The Dimapur-Imphal road was perfect and the other numerous bridle paths were turned into tracks capable of taking motor traffic with a view to increase the mobility of the army in the Naga Hills and Manipur. The Tammu road open for Field Marshal Alexander's retreating army in the rains of 1942 was kept on by the Naga labourers.¹ In 1944 the Allied forces, operating from Assam constructed a 478 mile supply road called Stilwell or Ledo which finally connected with 681 mile Burma road built from Kunming in China to Lashio in Burma in 1939 through mountains, swamps and jungles. The food stuffs were made sufficient to meet the needs. A new oil pipeline 750 miles long from Calcutta to the rearward communications in Assam was put to the requirements of the troops, a greater span than the famous desert pipeline from Iraq to Haifa.² The IV Corps under Lieutenant General Scoones with its three Divisions (17, 20 and 23) along with Assam Zone 'V' force, commanded by Lt. Col. Binney and Royal Air Force were already in action. The three Divisions were respectively commanded by Major General Cowan (17), Major General Gracey (20) and Major-General O.L. Roberts (23) respectively, while Assam Zone 'V' force and 33 Corps commanded by Lieutenant General, M. G. N. Stopford were in the Dimapur-Kohima area.³ In all, the Allied forces composed of 1,189,000 ground troops and 73,000 airmen were heaped in the South-East Asia for offensive and defensive operations against the Japanese.

In March 1944 the advancing Japanese waded through mountains, roads and tracks made by the British forces in Manipur and Naga Hills. A Japanese patrol column at Ukhrul cut the Indo-Burma road near Kangpokpi and from that day till June 23, the plains of Manipur remained without contact with the outside world. The Japanese were ready to invest Imphal and asked Netaji Subhash Chandra Bose to deliver a radio broadcast on the Emperor's birthday, offering him Imphal as a present. In the Naga Hills, the Japanese met stiff resistance in the beginning from the Assam force. Before reaching the Jassami ridge, a column of 31 Japanese Division which was advancing northwards via Ukhrul to Karasom and thence westwards through Lai to Tadubi on the Dimapur-Imphal road was engaged in a bloody battle with the Assam Regiment for hours together,

¹ *The Times*, London, December 29, 1944.

² Winston Churchill, *The Second World War*, V. VI, *Triumph and Tragedy*, London, 1954, p. 144.

³ See Evans and James, *Imphal*, London, 1962.

in the hill-strip of Arahou or Sajouba village, Mao Naga hill in Manipur, near which a tabooed, gnarled pear tree stands, and where according to Naga prophecy, there would be battlefield, thence would flow a blood-river, was actually caused by the heavy rainfall on along with mysterious rustlings on that evening. Afterwards, the Japanese successfully reached Kohima through Dimapur-Imphal road and fought the most ferocious battles with the Allied forces, particularly Assam Regiment and Rifles consisting mostly of the Gurkhas, Nagas, Lushais, Kukis, Khasis and Assamese under the command of British officers at Kohima for 13 days (from 4 to 17) in April which according to Lord Mountbatten would go down as one of the greatest battles in history. Despite the boast of the Tokyo radio claiming the fall of Kohima and march on Delhi, Japanese were defeated. The Kohima battle according to Kase Toshikazu, a Japanese writer, was the worst of its kind yet chronicled in the annals of war.¹ Sato's 31 Division troops were eventually smashed with a scene of horrible carnage and the remainders had to retreat from the Naga Hills. Otherwise, before their defeat at Kohima, the Japanese had occupied practically the whole of Nagaland and Manipur.

General Yamauchi's 15 Division at Imphal was severely mauled, although a provisional government of free India was declared at Moirang, 28 miles from Imphal. General Tanaka's 33 Division also suffered reverses at Bishenpur. The Japanese troops were without food except what they got from Naga, Meitei and Kuki villages-without communication and without reinforcement. They began to retreat towards Burma at the end of July, with a phrase scrawled in a Mao Naga village wall: "British too many guns, tanks and troops. Japanese going, but back in six months". But many of the Japanese died of bullet wounds, disease, hunger and floods in the appalling climatic conditions.

Moreover, they were given no respite by the Allies under the able and forceful command of General Slim, to extricate and rebuild their shattered troops; offensive operations were taken by the British Fourteenth Army. The 33 Corps first cleared the area around Mao and Ukhrul while the IV Corps recaptured the southern part of the Imphal plains with reinforcements. By the end of July, the 33 Division took up pursuit of the fleeing Japanese upto the Chindwin in Burma. The British and American fighter planes and medium bombers under Air Marshal Vincent poured hell over retreating

¹ See *The Eclipse of the Rising Sun*, London, 1951.

Japanese scurrying for life. The casualties on the British side in these battles in the Naga Hills and Manipur were about 16,667 of which approximately one forth (4,064) were incurred in the Kohima battle alone, against a deployed fighting force of about 1,60,000 in the area whereas the Japanese losses were recorded as 53,505 (30,502 killed, missing or dead), 15 Army strength was 84,280 with 7,000 INA and 4,000 reinforcements, i.e. 95,280 approximately.

There were a number of factors working against the Japanese such as the ill-conceived plan of Mutaguchi's invasion without proper knowledge of the topography of Manipur and Naga Hills, the shortage of Japanese troops, food supplies, the loyalty of the Nagas to the British, and the timely defensive preparations of the Allied forces.

The Japanese and Indian nationalist troops stormed Manipur and Naga Hills without carrying on any sufficient foodstuffs with them but depending solely upon the villages and towns which they conquered. Rice was requisitioned in large quantities for their troops and paddy for their horse and mule transport; a large number of chickens, pigs, in rare cases, even cattles, mithuns and buffaloes were consumed too; cooking pots, daos, axes, hoes, blankets, clothes and mates were taken away for their use. However, they paid for food supplies, labour, etc. in Japanese currency and in well-forged Rs. 10 Indian currency notes. The Nagas were used as coolies and forced to carry heavy loads for long distances. Occassionally, they were locked inside the houses or tied up at night to prevent them from escaping. The Nagas who were suspected to be British spies were killed with utmost brutality against the norms of war as set down in the international law. Despite all these acts, the treatment of the Nagas by the Japanese was on the whole quite fair, though a very few cases of rape, murder and maltreatment were there.

The Japanese and the INA made many heart-rending, great appeals to obtain the co-operation of the Nagas particularly the government officials, policemen, educated men, village headmen, police interpreters for the intelligence purposes and, of course, to a certain extent, were able to woo some of them to their side on the ambiguous and ill-fated promise that their victory would confirm recognition of Nagaland as an independent sovereign state. The Nagas incurred to themselves continuous privation, hardship, torture and death in the cherished hope that they would be free as before when the Japanese had won. In the short span of conquest the Japanese introduced their system of government and currency in occupied Nagaland and Manipur for about four months. The introduction

of the Japanese administration, however temporary, abolished the arbitrary boundaries drawn by the British government.

But the Nagas as a whole, undoubtedly supported the Allied forces because of the obvious reason that the British in nearly a century of the rule had founded unquestionable affinity with the Nagas and used them in their service. Many of the Naga villages were destroyed as a result of fighting, bombardments and other military operations; some persons were killed by Allied bombardments and thousands of houses containing paddy stocks were set afire to prevent them from falling into the hands of the Japanese. Such houses numbered 2,780 in the Naga Hills and 9,103 in Manipur. When fighting took place near their habitations, the Nagas went into the nearby jungles and returned only after it was over. Many other Nagas migrated to Imphal, to be away from the fighting areas. But the personal and material damage they suffered was greater as the result of the British military operations against the Japanese than they suffered directly or indirectly at the hands of the Japanese. The British explained politely to the Nagas the unavoidable circumstances which led to such losses.

Above all, the Nagas put extraordinary labour, showed spontaneous loyalty to the British and helped them in different forms in the hope that the British would not fail to do something for the good of their future. In this way many Nagas and Kukis were recruited as regular British soldiers in the Assam Rifles and in the Assam Regiment and many more thousands acted as faithful spies and rescue stragglers, bringing important and accurate military information on the movements of the Japanese troops and supply lines which enabled the Allied forces to ambush and capture or destroy the Japanese patrol parties and even they misled the Japanese by giving them wrong information much to the advantage of the British. They removed the dead bodies and carried the wounded in the battlefields and the loads in the peace time. They also killed some of the Japanese, arrested some others and handed them over to the Allied troops. At one time, the Nagas had the distinction of having captured more Japanese prisoners than the whole of the Fourteenth Army. Sometimes, the Nagas laid down ground signals which indicated to the Allied aircraft the presence of the Japanese without any regard to the bombing that would follow to raze their villages to the ground and bring immense sufferings. Also they had guided the British patrols to ambush, the Japanese. Above all, Japanese were refused supply of foodstuffs.

For all these, in opinion of many best qualified to judge, "the

loyalty of the Nagas did much to bring the Japanese invaders to a halt overlooking the plains of Assam".¹ A commendable credit to the Nagas, Field Marshal Sir William Slim in his book, *Defeat Into Victory*, writes: "The gallant Nagas whose loyalty, even in the most depressing times of the invasion, had never faltered. Despite floggings, torture, execution, and the burning of their villages, they refused to aid the Japanese in any way or to betray our troops. Their active help to us was beyond value or praise. Under the leadership of devoted British political officers, some of the finest types of the Indian Civil Service, in whom they had complete confidence, they guided our columns, collected information, ambushed enemy patrols, carried our supplies, and brought in our wounded under the heaviest fire, and then, being the gentlemen they were, often refused all payment. Many a British and Indian soldier owes his life to the naked, head-hunting Nagas, and no soldier of the Fourteenth Army who met them will ever think of them but with admiration and affection."

But by the end of August 1944, the fanished Japanese were driven out of the Naga Hills and Manipur. Even in the Burma proper, British forces under the command of Lord Mountbatten were fighting the Japanese tooth and nail. In the Northern Burma, General Stilwell's forces captured Myitkyina on August 3, opening the Ledo-Burma Road. Mandalay had fallen to the British troops on 20 March 1945, followed by Prome, Pegu and Rangoon in June. Following the capitulation of Germany on May 7, the war moved ever closer to Japan. After the decision of the Allied forces in the Potsdam Conference, two atom bombs built by the USA and tested at inland Mexico were dropped one at Hiroshima and the other at Nagasaki, causing 60,000 persons dead, 100,000 wounded and 200,000 rendered homeless at the former, while the casualties of the latter were few only. On September 2, the Japanese declaration of unconditional surrender brought to an end the bloodiest war that had inflicted an untold sorrow to mankind, ever known, in which millions of peoples died, billions of dollars were spent and cities ravaged beyond description.

Now, we will briefly examine what the Nagas got as the aftermath of the war. First, during the period of war and after the ejection of the Japanese from Manipur and the Naga Hills, a number of relief works in the forms of food, medicines, house-building materials and cash were provided by the British government as a debt of gratitude

¹ *A Report: On the Measures of Rehabilitation and Reconstruction Undertaken by the Government of India in the Naga Hills and Manipur State in 1944-45, in order to Repair the Ravages Caused by the Japanese Invasion in 1944*, p. 4.

for Nagas' role in the war and as a measure of reconstruction of the areas under the scheme of relief measures. Later on compensation was also given to the war-affected villages of the Naga Hills and Manipur. A detachment of the Nagas famous for the help they rendered to the Allies against Japan were called in Delhi to participate in the victory week in March 1946.

Second, a large number of modern rifles, ammunition, unexploded shells and grenades were left behind by the Japanese and British forces in various Naga villages, although the Government through local administrators had taken them substantially on the traditional fashion of oath-taking that they had not possessed the unauthorised rifles, etc. in their houses. Yet they hid many rifles and ammunition in the secluded places on oath-taking day, which later on were used for their protection and for hunting animals. Some of these weapons were responsible for a number of deaths and injuries, some serious and some slight. The Nagas had learnt from them how to use these modern weapons. In other words, the foundation of military science had been laid.

Third, the standard of living of the Nagas in ease and comfort became higher than the other tribes of Assam on receipt of higher wages or earnings and in the purchase of indigenous products by the Japanese and Allied troops in cash and compensation for the war services. Subsequently, a tiny petty bourgeois class of the native people who made their fortunes out of the profits of the war had arisen on the modern capitalistic basis.

Fourth, the centuries-old isolation of the Nagas, and other tribes of the north-east of India and Burma from outside world was broken off, even at fringes by American aircraft flying supplies over the 'hump' from Assam to Chungking. They were galvanised within a transient span of time into the modern streams and conceptions of life, humanity and made known to outside world. On the other hand, the Nagas, hitherto almost untouched by any but scanty introduction of the British administration came into direct contact with the different nationalities comprising Allied and Axis forces whom till then they knew only through hearsays or legends. They began to conceive of themselves as part of a larger world which had until then been regarded as something alien and separate and with the affairs of which they had little concern.

Fifth, the opening and improvement of the rapid communications by road, railway and air linking them with the parts of India and Burma for the military needs, transformed tremendously the economic, political, social, moral and cultural life of the Naga people. To

put it a little differently, the war detached the Nagas from traditional moorings still precariously preserved by the British rule. Their traditional customs, culture and social values were challenged and thrown into mud of confusion and uncertainty, synthesising western life into all aspects of their life.

Finally, it speeded up the intercourse among the Nagas themselves and they gave up the traditional feuds, and tried to learn from the history about the rise and fall of nation-states with the aid of nationalism, however, narrowly conceived and outdated. They talked in terms of unity and nation, like peoples elsewhere in the world. The inscription like "When you go home tell them of us, and say for your tomorrow we gave our today" in the heart of Kohima war cemetery, echoes the sentiments of the Nagas of sacrifice their life for the sake of humanity and nation, rising above the narrow bounds of selfish ends. In brief, it was the Second World War which had propelled psychological cataclysm far beyond its confines than anything that had taken place during the British rule for about 70 years. Thus the war also enshrined powerful political commotion, dimension and ferment among the educated middle-class Nagas, particularly those of the areas affected by the war.

LEGACY OF THE BRITISH RULE

In retrospect, if we ask ourselves what legacy had the British left to the Nagas when they withdrew from India in 1947, the answer would be that it was a mixed blessing. Certainly, the British had given the Nagas in so many ways, say, pointedly they brought with them the modern political ideas and institutions, education, nationalism, science and philosophy on the positive side, and rebellion, nihilism and enigma on the negative side when they came into contact with the Nagas who differed from them in physique, language and culture.

The Nagas, for centuries before the advent of the British, had lived free, out of Indian and Burmese rule but in constant fear and danger of their life under the shadow of horrible head-hunting wars, of one village or tribe against other, a feature followed by the Greeks and Egyptians too before their rational mind abandoned it to civilization. Above all, the waves of invasions of the Meiteis (Manipuris) and Assamese caused their life unsafe. As described elsewhere, head-hunting wars were appalling: the villagers could not work properly in their fields; property was not safe; men and women including children, liable to be killed indiscriminately, could not go about without a strong escort and protection. In consequence, there

was no room for patriotism, unity, proper cultivation of the soil, commodious building, market place, academy, science, art, temple, pursuit of knowledge, decency, reverence for life and other human creativity. But the evils of head-hunting had steadily died down, partly as the result of the administrative measures taken by the British¹, partly because of the religious fervour and partly because of the realisation of its detrimental aspects by the Nagas themselves that under this obsolete and worn-out system their society would crumble down to pieces. It was, however, the British who acted as a suitable mechanism for enforcing quick awareness of its bad effects. Again, the barbarous practice and trade of slaves as prisoners to be sold in Sibagar was also put down gradually.² Except these evils suppressed, the British did not want other revolutionary reforms that would produce a social transformation due to the realisation that any interference with existing customs was likely to cause undesirable trouble.

Another legacy left by the British was the British bureaucracy. Before the British took up the administration of the Naga village-states, each village or tribe, in some cases, was peaceful, orderly, and regulated by the unwritten customary laws. The legislative, executive and judicial functions were exercised by the village king and councillors (*gaonburas*), and chaotic anarchism, misrule, and lawlessness hardly prevailed except unmitigated evil of the head-hunting war and feud in the villages. However, under the British rule, the Deputy Commissioner, usually a trained ICS officer working as an Agent of the Governor of Assam assisted by Sub-Divisional Officers, was the key official on whom the entire commensurate authority of administration of the district was given. Not only were the collection of revenue, the maintenance of peace and order and administration of justice, but he also used to tour the whole Naga Hills district periodically, being treated with obsequious respect from the villagers as super perfect if not belonging to a master race. Sometimes, the other British officers made sporadic visits to any belt of partly administered area rather in the nature of expeditions. Whenever he went, he was warmly received by the representatives of the tribes in bright red blankets with gifts of eggs, chickens, spears, headdresses, daos and colourful, woven shawls and with bottles of ricebeer and other edible things. In return, the British officers or any other important visitor gave them the red blankets,

¹ See J.P. Mills, *Report on the Census of India*, 1931.

² Michell, J.F., *Report (Topographical, Political and Military), On The North-East Frontier of India, Calcutta, 1883*, p. 209.

wine, cigarettes, etc. The oppression of the weak village by other aggressive, stronger village was checked. On receipt of information of head-hunting and feuding among the villagers, DC or his SDO would visit at once the affected villages, bring the elders of the disputant villages together and settle the problem amicably; the harmful results of feuding or dispute were explained to them and the villagers were ensured to live without fear of one another and to work peacefully to their fields. Prompt and stern punishment was assured for the defaulter to meet the ends of justice. The Indian Penal Code and the Codes of Criminal and Civil Procedure were not applied in Nagaland even though they were taken in spirit not by the letter in administering justice. There were a number of interpreters in the courts of the Deputy Commissioner and the Sub-Divisional Officers, with whose help the disputes were settled without any delay. On the other hand, the British administration always sought the advice of the village councillors on any customary matters before pronouncing final decision. Almost all the times these village heads were given powers to conduct their own affairs according to their own customary law and justice except the serious problems such as raids or aggressions or Christian Nagas defining old customs of any kind that necessitated the British administrators to use force and decide the matter with English sense of justice. One red blanket to an interpreter at every two years and one to headman at every three years were given as the insignia of friendship with British government. But the village councillors got no regular pay, but were exempted from payment of annual house-tax and a commission from the government at the time of depositing the house-tax of Rs. 2 or 3 in some cases, collected from each household.

In the Naga Hills, as in other hill areas of Assam, at an average distance of 24 miles, there was a bungalow which was customarily arranged in a cantonment, outside the roads and villages. Two of the five Assam Rifles—a semi-military police under the orders of the superintendent of Assam police, the composition one consisted of four British officers, a commandant and three assistants, usually from Gurkha Regiments and of the six hundred soldiers mostly Gurkhas (Nepalese) along with Naga, Kuki and Mizo hillmen, were posted at Kohima and Imphal for the use of force only on occasions, sufficient to control the likelihood of Naga and Kuki uprising and any breakdown of peace by the village feuds. Not only that they had to make a show of impressive force and strength of the British presence in their land. Another three posts also were manned by the Assam Rifles

battalion at Ukhrul, the Tangkhul Naga centre to the north-east, Tamenglong, the Kacha Naga area to the west and Churachandpur, the Kuki centre on the south edge of the plains of Manipur. On the Burmese side, the Burma Military Police were given charge to police the frontier tribal areas of the upper Burma and to check dacoity in the interior land.

Above all, the crude system of village government which in many ways was identical to the English liberal government in form and character was, to a certain extent, modernised. At the higher level, the British authority on a very loose rein and at the bottom, the village headed by the king or chieftain reigned the day justly and efficiently in the interests of the governed. Thus, their land was protected in a great measure of safety; agriculture was encouraged, the productive terraced type of cultivation was introduced to the other parts of the Naga Hills with better irrigation facilities, their land was made safe under the operation of the Chin Hills regulation, 1896; the economic and political exploitation by outsiders was stopped to a very great extent under the Inner Line Regulation Pass system; the primitive barter system replaced by currency system; the introduction of this monetary medium of exchange altered the standards of their value of wealth from the forms of paddy and cultivable land to plenty of money, a modern man should have; the prices of commodities controlled; shopkeepers mainly peripatetic Marwaris and Punjabis who were the big financiers as well as the small village bankers¹ were put into licence; big moneylenders were disallowed; outsiders like Nepalese, etc. were also not allowed to settle in Naga Hills without a pass and such a pass was issued only under very special circumstances. And no land of Nagas was allowed to be sold to any outsider without the express consent and authority of the Deputy Commissioner under the Inner Line Regulation Pass system. In all, the British rule was, after 1881, peaceful and stable due to the fact that the administrators, particularly anthropologists, with personal liking and acclimatisation for living among the wild Naga tribes, were posted there and they dealt the Nagas with intimate knowledge of their language, interest, customs, traditions, viewpoints and psychology on the assumption that lack of such quality and knowledge had been responsible for many of the misunderstandings and fatal errors in the past which had tarnished the well-meant endeavours to control wisely and equitably the affairs of those whose culture had been evolved under different environments.

¹ See also, Jawaharlal Nehru, *Discovery of India*, Calcutta, 1946, p. 310.

Another important gift of the British rule to the Nagas was the inculcation of the spirit of nationalism, hitherto unknown to them for centuries on account of their geographical isolation and the regard of the universal brotherhood of mankind without distinction of race, sex, language, geography, religion, culture. We have seen in earlier pages how nationalism was born under the impact of the British administration and thereafter nourished by the educated Nagas in the early 1940s down till the present day. The fact cannot be altered that the Naga villages or tribes were in a state of war, one against another with no bond of unity, no idea of common interest or objectives and no concept of a Naga nation before the British appeared on the scene. Whether the British emergence in the Naga Hills was inscrutable ordain of God as G.K. Gokhale eulogized the British connection with India or march of providence in Hegel's concept or Darwinian destiny of the survival of the fittest, as to the English trodding upon, the British rule had brought into the Nagas a political renaissance and consciousness that awakened in the Nagas the realistic existence of the modern nation-states.

Intimately connected with the Naga nationalism was the development of the western political and economic ideas, ethics, social customs, aesthetics, literature and the like conveniently called western civilization that was founded almost from the Greek and Roman civilizations for years. The rule of law, the theories of the democratic principles and institutions and self-determination introduced by the British were readily accepted by the Nagas through introduction of English language as a medium of communication.

On the other hand, the introduction of education through the medium of English language, in all the parts of India after Macaulay's crusade for the cause, however slow its progress, spread over the Nagaland also. The American Baptist mission as well as British government established 161 L.P. schools, 3 M.E. schools, one High school for the Nagas, persuaded the adults to go to schools by supplying almost everything free in primary stages and awakened them. Roman script was introduced since they did not have a script of their own. The major Naga language and lexicography were written. In fact, after the Second World War, the Nagas raised a great demand for the spread of the educational facilities as they believed that education would bring them civilization, wealth, power, influence, science, technology, government service, etc. Moreover, they realised that if education would spread among them, exploitation by the advanced plains people namely the Hindus and Muslims, whose language and culture were entirely alien to them, would cease to exist. Not only that, education

would enable them to have administrators from amongst their own men in their land, that would ultimately ensure self-rule. Thus, in precision, the British gave English as a common language to means of communication in place of their many numerous dialects and languages different from one another, and as a means of access to modern science, technology, political institutions, economic developments, etc. With the help of English, the Nagas from different village-states could meet, talk, discuss and settle their own problems and differences in a spirit of one people. So, it was eventually a common unifying bond among themselves as well as the outside world. Simultaneously learning of Assamese and Manipuri languages was also encouraged as these two languages were spoken by the majority of the peoples in Assam and Manipur. The study of Bible, singing of Christian hymns and songs and western English literature immensely brightened Nagas' love of freedom, equality, liberty, democracy and right. The enchanted lyrics of Lord Byron for free life, the thought-provoking sonnets of Wordsworth, upholding the dignity of man, poems of Shelley, Keats, Milton and the writings of Shakespeare, Locke, Bentham, J.S. Mill, Burke, George Bernard Shaw, etc. inspired them to awaken into patriotic and cultural life. They also provoked them to study the evolutionary and revolutionary march of world history—a part of which the French Revolution, the Greek war of independence, the American Revolution and the Russian Revolution taught them the various ways of struggling for value, independence and betterment of human life.

As apart from the political contribution as we have seen above the British infused western science and technology into the Nagas particularly during the Second World War which was ferociously fought in Burma, Manipur and Nagaland. Certainly, the ancestors of Nagas as their available evidences indicate, carried the scientific knowledge with them, but suffered setback during the period of stagnation and migration lasting for centuries, during which they had lost their originality in this field. It was perhaps largely due to their nomadic nature of life in the early stages. J.H. Hutton's comment in this respect is worthwhile. He writes: "Stresses of various sorts from famine, revolution, conquest and what not, have led to the isolation of groups of people, whether compelled to migrate to the mountains, or to wander without any fixed abode, and so, by way of loss of caste, to loss of culture and to a reversion to primitive standards of life."¹ But under the British rule, they were provided with the knowledge

¹ *Modern India and the West*, ed. by L.S.S.O. Malley, London, 1941, p. 415.

of science which dispelled many ravages of traditional customs, native prejudices and superstitions in ignorance, and which revolutionised the Nagas into new intellectual and scientific thinking life, leading to look into their ancient scientific stores also.

Before the British appeared in Nagaland, the communications were terribly dangerous, difficult and almost non-existent. The Nagas virtually used animals' trails, rivers and mountains as the foot-paths from time immemorial. Most of their lands were still jungles infested by wild animals, and travel was possible only on foot. They lived and died in their village-states, knowing nothing, save by vague and distant villages where their relatives were living. At the end of the 19th century and the beginning of 20th century, the British government like ancient imperial Rome, started a great crusade of development of railways, telegraphs, telephones, postal service, roads, bridle paths, bridges and the like, linking the Naga Hills also with the rest of India and brought the previously isolated hills into contact with one another, more especially, by opening the Assam Railway through Dimapur where the Manipur Road through Kohima provided an outlet for trade on commercial lines and for the transport of goods to and from Nagaland. This expansion of communication and development of transport largely undertaken to serve British imperial interests proved harbinger of prosperity to the Nagas. The natural result of the development of communication was the development of trade and commerce, for which the Naga traders began to go to Rangoon, Calcutta and Bombay for selling their traditional products and buying machine-made things. As a result of opening of communication the British scholars, administrators, missionaries and indologists discovered the geography, people, society, religion, language and culture mostly of rare vestiges of pre-historic society which still survive but which are now being rapidly swept away by advancing tide of west-oriented civilization. The unique mass of records and writings set down in systematic manner throws up a treasure of knowledge about the Nagas of whom the outsiders knew only very little.

The British also brought the Western medicine, sanitation and health services to Nagaland by establishing 5 hospitals and 6 dispensaries, though in initial stages the facilities were far from satisfactory. Before the modern medical science came, the Nagas depended on the religious rites and ceremonies and medicinal plants or herbs to cure the sick. Cholera, smallpox, malaria, dysentery, scab, leprosy, goitre, yaws and tuberculosis took heavy toll of life and the public health services fought hard to decimate them and bring down

mortality figures low. But the sporadic outbreaks of smallpox, malaria and cholera, as the one occurred in 1924, killed over thousands of Nagas in spite of inoculations and injections.

On the other hand, the British policy kept the Nagas into little contact with the rest of India and when it became independent they were almost where they were, as if preserved as museum specimen, raw material for anthropologists, almost on the verge of the fact that the Nagas were not developed, generally because of the shortage of sufficient trained British manpower and financial sources, except the undertaking of development concerning the imperial purposes like that happened during the Second World War. Above all they were not given any chance of contact with the Indian Nationalist Congress leaders, nor were they allowed to enter into the Naga Hills for contact with the Nagas for the obvious and other reasons, putting in different style that the British were protecting the Nagas against the more 'disruptive' elements of the external advanced culture like moneylenders, sharp traders, peddlars, grabbing landlords and Hindu religious priests. The result of the lack of intercourse was misunderstanding and suspicion of each other that developed unhappy relations between Nagaland and independent India later on, notwithstanding that "Nor did the British imply any suggestion that the Nagas were not included within India, which embraced everything up to the accepted border with Burma." Perhaps, if it may be so, the inward apprehension of the British that once the national movement for freedom found place in the warlike Nagas and their strategic hills, they would be engulfed in by tumultuous and revolutionary thorns, in spite of the outward appearance of their policy that advanced Hindus and Muslims in the plains were to be off from exploitation of the weak Nagas that the British put up sometimes. But, rather it was British policy as we find in Kaye's *Life of Metcalfe*: "It was our policy in those days to keep the natives of India in the profoundest state of barbarism and darkness, and very attempt to diffuse the light of knowledge among the people, either of our own or of the independent states, was vehemently opposed or resented." However, it may obviously seem that the policy of isolation had inflicted harmful, rather than useful effect since it was followed by suspicion and discord between the Nagas and the rest of India in the post-Independence era.

Still the worst of all the British policy was that of the division of the Nagas into Naga Hills proper and adjacent parts of Assam, Manipur and Burma and ultimate demarcation of boundaries without any consultation or consent of the Naga people, with a clandestine desire

to weaken them, at the experiences of their terrible raids in the plains and revolts against the British paramountcy. In spite of what we are told insufficiently that such division of the Nagas was because of the reasons of administrative facility and convenience which continued up to 1947, much against the protests of the Nagas from time to time. Since the Nagas were not strong enough to enforce their will on the British whose authority was very powerful, had added a crushing blow to the rise of Nagaism and Naga nationalism. As a result, it took far longer for the Nagas to recover from the physical, psychological division and impact and to start afresh to the way of 'one Naga'. And the failure of the British government to unify all Nagas under one administrative unit or state before their withdrawal from India and the use of "Naga Hills district"--a term only covering central Nagaland, excluding the other Naga areas, which was fully inadequate and misleading, it may be said, had forfeited the most grateful gift of the Naga people. Had the British visualized the foremost demand of all Nagas for integration into one unit and state, they would have received a lot of warm goodwill from the Nagas. Time and again, the British rule which created firm boundaries where previously there had been none, between India China and Burma, cutting across the Nagas here and there against their will, had certainly laid the basis of future trend of Naga progress into conflict with the neighbours.

Some Naga areas bordering Burma and Tibet of China were also completely left unadministered partly because of the British administration found them on extremely wild border areas which were to be effort-wasting in economic or strategic significance to warrant regular administration, partly because of a desire to quarantine the tribes from 'political infection' from the Hinduized plains people, partly because of the ignorance of topography and impenetrable tropical jungle, together with bad reputation of head-hunting of the tribes, but also partly because of the important frontier officers sincerely thought they were happier, fuller and better as they were in peace and contentment and the outside encroachment would disturb them unnecessarily. But those administrative officials and anthropologists also were in this line of thought accused of trying to establish the primitive folk museum at the eastern extremities of the British India. However undefined, the area was considered to be a part of Assam after the British victory in the First Anglo-Burmese War where the Nagas called that part of territory as free Nagaland.

The ideas of Crown colony mooted by the Conservative government which had highlighted the Nagas, in the opposition of the

Indian and Burmese nationalist leaders, might perhaps be taken by the Labour government, merely as a geographical and political expression rather than its practicability, as Sir Andrew Clow reportedly said about the infeasibility of Nagaland independent state outside the Union of India. Yet the political arrangements were far from satisfactory in view of the expectations and promises made out by the Conservative Prime Minister, Winston Churchill and his government, when the Labour government left hurriedly the sub-continent of India after the divide and quit rule policy. On the whole, it can be fairly said that the British created more irritant problems than they had solved for the Nagas, although the Viceroy, Lord Wavell (1943-47) showed his anxiety over the future of the hill tribes of Assam¹ which Lord Mountbatten had almost neglected on the influence of Indian federalism and secular leadership of Jawaharlal Nehru's government and management or more perhaps he overlooked it as minor problem and thought worthless for U.K. Moreover, since the Naga tribes were taken as uncivilized barbarians, they were also given very little training in the art of running of a government in the modern established sense of the term.

Whatever the difficulties may be there in the British way of administering Nagaland the British administration did scarcely anything important to the abject backwardness of the Nagas except what it had a purpose and bearing on utilitarian service to their interests probably in the sense of liberalism of Bentham and J.S. Mill. But whatever may be said against the legacy and the remnants of imperial and colonial systems under the British rule, it is certainly satisfactory enough to point out that the primitive and mediaeval society of the Nagas was knocked out to transform into a modern sophisticated society as a result of the British impact. To put it more differently, it can be said that before the emergence of the British era, the Nagas were primitive, weak, poor, nasty, wild, disunited and backward in all textures of their lives, but became modern, fervid, rich, united, advanced and patriotic or nationalistic at the time of the British exit from India though in quite a limited sense. The vitality and awareness in thought and action of the Nagas today has grown upon the stone-foundation laid by the British, building something new out of its own wisdom and dynamism, with new changes of atmosphere and circumstances.

¹ Gopinath Bardoloi, *A Fateful Hour in Discovery of Assam*, Gauhati, 1954. pp. 74-84.

Free India and the Nagas

"Everything proceeds through struggle
and out of necessity."

—Heraclitus

RISE OF THE NAGA NATIONAL COUNCIL

Prior to the formation of the Naga National Council, there was the Naga Club which was the main centre of social and political gatherings. It steadily grew up into a sustained pressure group although it did not achieve any remarkable objective except a memorandum submitted to the Simon Commission. Nevertheless, it continued to be a meeting place where the educated and authoritative leaders of the Naga people met, discussed their problems and gossiped away their time.

After the Second World War, the Naga leaders did abruptly begin a muffled clamour for an incisive concept of federal state by uniting all the Nagas living in Assam, Manipur, Burma and the NEFA (Arunachal Pradesh) narrowly but broadly covering the other hill tribes of Assam, Chittagong hill tracts and north-west region of Burma. Very soon this inception became quite vocal but gave place to a sense of self-assurance among themselves that the British would do something for the Nagas before they had left India since the Nagas rendered valuable services obsequiously to the Allied forces during the war in Burma, Manipur and Nagaland. A rather modest British ICS officer, Sir Charles Pawsay, who was the Deputy Commissioner of the Naga Hills District for years, had qualified sincerity and deep love for the Naga people, whom his fate had ordained him to serve them just, incorruptible and merciful. He regarded them as like his children and moved heaven and earth for them, and the Nagas too adequately reciprocated his love and feeling with abiding faith. They engendered their belief that in no circumstances whatsoever he solved their problems was for their salvation. He desired himself earnestly to play the role of humanitarian A.O. Hume, the founder of the Indian National Congress in 1885 and the Irish theosophist Mrs. Annie Besant, in Nagaland and put his unusual energy for their cause. He sometimes like Lawrence of Arabia identified himself as leader of the Naga nationalism and stood for them to the limit of his powers. His official bungalow became a rendezvous where the Nagas

regularly converged and unfolded their inspirations and objectives.

In April 1945 Sir Pawsay established the Naga Hills District Tribal Council with unsparing labour for uniting together all the Nagas and organising the tribal councils as to reconstruct Naga Hills after the war ravages, according to modern democratic lines. But the fast moving political scene of India and the attitude of the Labour party in power in England at that time after the Conservatives were voted out of office, put Pawsay's plan in a quandary. However, his incipient Tribal Council now turned into the Naga National Council at a meeting held by representatives of different Naga tribes in Wokha, the centre of the Lotha Nagas in February 1946 as a tentacled political organisation to struggle for freedom and to manifest a new self-assertive quest for Naga identity, previously known much less or dormant or kept in check by the British colonial power. The Naga National Council primarily aimed at an active support of British officers working for social, economic, political and cultural development of the Nagas. But before long it not only acquired a life and momentum of its own but also switched over to political activity whose purpose now became to achieve the unification and solidarity of all Nagas under one government as their legitimate national aspirations and interests. Originally, the Naga National Council consisted of 29 members, representing various tribes on the basis of proportional representation, and from among whom the office bearers were elected. The finance were raised by contributions which every family made, ranging normally between rupee one to a hundred, or even more so. Making contribution also directly or indirectly implied, in a way, that every Naga was an allegiant member of the NNC. The Council encouraged reforms in the working of the tribal councils existing in respective tribes. It also published a monthly newspaper entitled the "*Naga Nation*".

At the time of the Cabinet Mission's plan for a united India (with Pakistan), going on in reluctance and suspension without a stalemate, the Naga National Council held another meeting at Wokha on 19 June 1946 and passed a resolution which contained the following clauses among others: "(i) The memorandum drafted by the members of the NNC and approved by the general meeting at Wokha, containing four clauses concerning the future position of the Naga Hills has been submitted to the representative of HMG by the NNC; (ii) This Naga National Council stands for the solidarity of all the Naga tribes including those of the unadministered areas; (iii) This Council strongly protests against the grouping of Assam with Bengal; and (iv) The Naga Hills should be continuously included in an autonomous Assam in a

free India, with local autonomy and due safeguards for the interests of the Nagas and the Naga tribes should have a separate electorate."

This resolution reflecting the political deadlock in India between the Hindus and Muslims over the two-nation theory, in spite of the Cabinet Mission's proposal to form a loose federation accommodating the interests of Hindus, Muslims and other minorities, could not take any decision for the complete separation from India. It was because of the fact the Nagas did not have much time at their disposal to decide an independent political line as they were renovating their villages after the horrible destruction caused by the war and on the understanding that in case of the settlement of the problem of the Hindus and Muslims in a sovereign state of free India, the Nagas would choose autonomy in Assam than going to Burma provided their interests were safeguarded as resolution stated; in case, Pakistan was virtually created out of the Muslim populated areas, the Nagas also would take a different decision regarding their own future. At this stage, realising the Labour government's pledge to withdraw from India as soon as possible and to transfer sovereignty either to one Indian nation or to India and Pakistan, the Nagas were working much more seriously and open-eyed for unity amongst themselves to form into a nation, so that their land ought to be guided by her own ideas and ideals and ruled by her own people. In order to achieve this political end, the Naga National Council assiduously hammered the Nagas to think in terms of the whole Naga nation.

The British administrators who sympathised with the Nagas in their efforts at attainment of a distinct being, either in India or outside, encouraged them to hold together. Opening the hall of the Central Sub-Tribal Council on 27 November 1946, Adams, the Deputy Commissioner of the Naga Hills, stressed upon the Nagas the importance of unity as speedily as possible. "Last of all," he said, "I should request you to stop the use of hot words amongst yourselves. Perhaps some use too many hot words, but you must remember that these words always delay the unity of your people. Try to settle all affairs and misunderstandings amicably. By doing this you will make of yourselves a nation."

In the same month the Premier Gopinath Bardoloi, an honest Assamese Hindu but devout Gandhian, visited the Naga Hills and was received with the most cordiality for his broad and sympathetic view to the cause of the Nagas.

At this time, the Naga National Council desired that their age-old partyless democracy should be kept intact from the political

parties of India. To give an effect to this, the National Council passed a resolution in October 1946, in which it was stated that no member of any political party would be allowed to enter into the Naga Hills without the permission of the NNC, apart from what was stipulated in the Inner Line Regulations.

In December 1946 the draft constitution of the Naga National Council in accordance with the resolution No. 2, of the NNC meeting at Mokokchung on 10 and 11 October came out, and was adopted by the NNC with minor modifications in 1947. The simple text of the constitution given below clearly stated how to forge unity and achieve the political objectives:

“This Constitution, to be known as the constitution and laws of the Naga National Council is adopted to provide a way of working together for peace and agreement between all the Naga tribes, of preserving and developing what is good of their own culture and customs, and to promote the growth of democratic self-government and the material welfare of the Naga people.

“Article I. *Jurisdiction*: The authority of the Naga National Council will extend over all the Naga Tribes represented in the Council by properly authorised members.

“Article II. *Membership*: All Naga Tribes are eligible for membership in the Naga National Council. Any Naga tribe wishing to join the Naga National Council will make an application through its Tribal Council, which will state that the Tribal Council concerned is willing to accept the lawful authority of the Naga National Council, to abide by its rules and orders. The Naga National Council will at its next general meeting consider the application and come to such decision as it considers proper.

“Article III. *The Council*: (1) The Naga National Council will be composed of representatives from all the member tribes elected by the Tribal Councils concerned. The number of representatives from each tribe will be determined on the basis of the population of the tribe concerned; (2) The representatives shall serve for a term of three years and be eligible for re-election; (3) Vacancies occurring for any reason on the Council shall be filled by election from the Tribal Council of the vacating member; (4) Any member of the Council who has been convicted in any court of law for an offence involving serious moral turpitude shall be forthwith removed from office; (5) Any member may be removed from office for serious neglect of duty by a vote of not less than two-thirds of the Council, after the member concerned has been given full opportunity to hear the charges against him, and to defend himself before the Council.

“Article IV. *Powers and Duties*: To represent and to speak on behalf of all the member Naga Tribes in all matters pertaining to their welfare and interests, to raise and to administer funds to be devoted to the general welfare of the Naga people and for the payment of salaries and authorised expenses of officers and employees of the Council, proper accounts, open to public inspection, are to be kept for all income and expenditure from these funds. To protect and develop the culture of the Naga people, to make amendements or additions to this constitution, provided that two-thirds of the Council at a general meeting approve; to delegate such of its powers and authority to subordinate councils as it approves, except where the authority has been delegated by Government, Government’s approval will be required before any further delegation is allowed; to adopt resolutions providing the way in which the Naga National Council itself shall conduct its business; to appoint an Executive Committee to carry on the day to day work of the Council; to appoint sub-committees to deal with specific subjects if considered necessary, to exercise such further powers and assume such further responsibilities as may be delegated to it by the Government from time to time; to supervise and inspect the work of the Councils subordinate to the Naga National Council and to appoint such staff as may be necessary for the carrying out of its business”

T. Aliba Imti, Secretary of the NNC, addressing a public meeting at Kohima on 6 December 1946 called upon the Nagas to prepare for self-determination and fundamental rights, and said, “The Naga National Council stands for the unification of all the Naga tribes and their freedom...and cannot accept anything dishonourable for our people at the time of deliberations for our country. I know that the Nagas are a distinctive community with sufficient technical characteristics. Today we are in the most critical time of our history. Everything around us is moving and the time has come for us to move rightly. We cannot sit idle waiting to receive only what others assign for us. We must take the initiative and make a history of our own choice. Our destiny rests upon our shoulders..you are looking beyond the ocean for help. Cutting it short, I declare to you that Great Britain will never endanger her foreign policy for the sake of you. Lastly never forget that you have been excluded for enough time, excluded from every angle of life. Who is responsible for it? I have but one word to say. Our country is connected with India, connected in many ways. We should continue that connection. I do not mind whether future India be a Congress govern-

ment or a League government. But as a distinctive community as I stated before, we must also develop according to our genius and taste. Hence, protection becomes inevitable. We shall enjoy home-rule in our country, but on broader issues be connected with India. We must fight for it, we must get it; keep on watching."

At this crucial stage, all the leaders of the hill tribes of Assam and Burma became quite restive as to what the future might bring for them since a host of nation-states great and small, each morally equal, with inviolable frontiers and inevitable right to govern itself, emerged under the process of liberation and self-determination. The call for political unity of all the tribes on an altogether higher plane began even if it was too late to bring in the desired objective of a common platform. Realising the difficulties of its aim and the pell-mell political conditions of the region, the tribes began to cut their own separate political interests according to what suited their sentiments most. The Naga leaders felt that the people of the other tribes were not prepared fully for the self-rule which the Nagas had unshakably committed to themselves, seeing no taint or blemish, despite the movement of the Khasi States People's Union, the Garo National Council and Mizo Union for their tenuous web of separatist political tendencies. However, even at such an eleventh hour the hill student leaders from Assam Hills who were studying in Calcutta took keen interest in politics, in conscious and articulate of the nationalism, felt to be gathered of all the hill people in a single but federal political unit, and tried to bring about a political movement known as "Indo-Burma Movement". Its aim was "to unite into one unit all the parts of land lying along the border of India and Burma, and other adjacent areas, which are inhabited by a similar kind of people, and which can be conveniently demarcated into a unit; the unit thus formed be designed as *Indo-Burma* and the peoples dwelling in it be called collectively Indo-burmans, whilst retaining their tribal names separately (Indo-burma and Indo-burmans may be changed if better names can be found). The future status of Indo-burma thus formed (whether it will be an absolutely independent unit, an autonomous unit in free India, a part of Burma or Assam, etc.) will be decided by a representative body of the peoples."¹

But to be sure, such broad collective scheme of the first fragile movement for independence, to an ever increasing extent, percolating downwards in the consciousness of people so small a calibre, got engrained in the whirlpools of flabby tribal divisions and considerations as reflected of a centuries-old problem and ultimately evaporated

¹ A resolution dated December 15, 1946.

into wreckedness and doom in the absence of any political organisation or forum commensurate with it in broad way, where all the hill people could exchange their ideas and opinions to form a common policy and ideal.

At the beginning of 1947, circumstances in the Indian sub-continent were fast changing and air was thick with the news of the division of India into Hindu India and Muslim Pakistan, as the Congress and the Muslim League leaders fought grimly to secure their respective political viewpoints. At the same time, the driving forces towards independence and freedom were moving dramatically through many parts of the world by the freedom movements of dependent peoples. More or less, the Nagas too fell in the same curious chain of processes, looking the right to freedom and equality written into the Charter of the United Nations as a sunny hope. The political stand of the NNC also changed more and more with a view to securing for the Nagas a position of predominant political power. At last, they filled with patriotic enthusiasm, voiced out from moderate demand for some sort of regional autonomy at a time in Assam, to outright sovereign independent Nagaland state, without giving due consideration to the concept of the Crown colony or a Trust territory under the UN Charter as they were now feeling a shiver of apprehension of losing their identity with the disappearance of the British in the midst of Hindu rule. Ignoring sombre realities of the times, this ambitious scheme was rather vaguely resolved by the NNC on 20 February 1947 and submitted to His Majesty's Government and Government of India as a memorandum in which it was stated: "The Naga people were independent and their country was not subjugated by the Ahom kings of the Assam valley, who ruled for seven hundred years. Nagaland never formed part of Assam or India at any time before the advent of the British. Little was known of Nagaland when the British obtained suzerainty over the Assam valley by the treaty of Yandabo. The British first attacked the Naga people in 1839; but the fight went on for fifty years till the Ao Naga country was taken over in 1889. Since then the Naga people have remained loyal, friendly and peaceful. In the First World War, thousands of Naga people served in distant France to help the British and Allied cause. In the recent Second World War, when the Japanese army attempted to invade India through Nagaland, it was the co-operation of the Nagas both in intelligence and jungle warfare which enabled the British forces to halt the invasion at Kohima, the headquarters of the district, thus saving Assam and the rest of India from the devastation of war.

“These free-loving Nagas look up to His Majesty’s Government and the Government of India to do the just and proper thing and grant them their just demand for setting up an *Interim Government* of Naga people. As the modern world recognises the importance of the psychological implications in dealing with nations, to have peace within and without, it is necessary to know the tradition and national aspiration of people and to respect them. The attitude of a people has a great bearing in the formation of national policy.

“In framing the future constitution of India, certain thought-provoking factors must not be ignored: (i) Ethnically the Nagas are from a distinct stock; (ii) They have a distinct social life, manner of living, laws and customs, and even their method of governance of the people is quite different; (iii) In religion, the great majority of the Nagas are animists; but Christianity which was introduced by the American Baptists long before the advent of the British rule is now speedily spreading. Such factors as the above make it imperative that the Nagas should have a separate form of government. The Nagas have an efficient system of administration. Most of the tribes retain to a considerable degree their ancient laws and customs and village organisations which have lasted through centuries, and these form an integral part of their life, and once destroyed or allowed to decay, can never be replaced by a system so suitable to them. Democracy in its purest form exists among the Nagas. The basis of the Naga system is the village organisation. Every village is a sovereign independent unit in the tribes. Village is managed by a Council of elders and men of influence elected by the people. Such a polity, such a state of society and democratic life cannot be found in any other parts of India.

“In the 1935 Constitution for India and Assam, the areas inhabited by the Nagas were kept outside the jurisdiction of the Provincial and Central popular governments, and were formed into “Excluded Areas” where the legislatures had no way and the Nagas were kept under the special responsibility of the Governor of the province in his capacity as the Crown Representative. In other words, the Naga people have had no connection with the policies and politics of the different groups of Indian politicians. Ought the British government or the Government of India throw this society into the heterogeneous mixture of other Indian races? A constitution drawn by the people who have no knowledge of Nagaland and the Naga people will be quite unsuitable and unacceptable to the Naga people. Thrown among forty crores of Indians, the one million Nagas, with their unique system of life, will be wiped out of existence. Hence this

earnest plea of the Nagas for a separate form of *Interim Government* to enable them to grow to a fuller stature should be acceded.

"In the light of the facts stated in the foregoing paragraphs, and in view of the isolated geographical position of Nagaland, and taking into consideration the unique characteristics of Naga polity and the compact block of Nagaland, this Memorandum is placed with the authorities for setting up of an *Interim Government* of the people with financial provisions for a period of ten years, at the end of which the Naga people will be left to choose any form of government under which they themselves choose to live."¹

In other words, elucidating the historical, ethnical and cultural differences between the plains people particularly the Assamese and the Nagas, the Memorandum asked for justice and monetary aid either from Great Britain or India or both (which Nagas did not mention explicitly) to help them stand on their own feet by setting up an interim government, initially for a period of 10 years. This Naga entreaty stemmed from the plain fact that the revenue obtained from Nagaland was not enough to maintain an expensive government of a modern type and the Nagas, meanwhile, dallied with the idea of complete independence along with full conviction that they suffered enough from their being minority position in Assam, Manipur and Burma. In another Memorandum on 19 May 1947, the NNC loftily clarified that the 10-year interim government might be a government conducted by a Naga people with full legislative, executive and judicial powers and that the guardian power might maintain such a force in Nagaland as was considered essential for the purposes of defence.

This separatist tendency had evolved mainly because of the treatment meted out to them by the converted Hindus and Muslims in Assam and Manipur who regarded them as "untouchables" or "dirtyties," for their religion and food habits since the Hindus in the plains of Assam and Manipur despised them for their eating beef and the Muslims pork, for the Nagas ate both. The gulf was further widened by the exclusion of the Nagas from the contact and affairs of the other parts of India under the British Governor's control and the Christian missionaries whipped up the inveterate prejudices against the Hindus, describing them as inimical to animism and Christianity, since many Nagas had lately embraced Christianity as a superior and civilized religion than the Buddhism, Hinduism and Islam.

But the appeal of the Nagas failed miserably to convince the British Labour government as the Naga Hills and other Naga areas had

¹ *Naga Nation*, February 1947, pp. 3-6.

been always regarded as 'a part of the British India after they were brought under British control, although some local administrators were working for making these areas for a separate Crown colony or Trust territory when Conservative government was in power. Whatever might be the reason, the Labour government probably did not want to open another ponderous issue at the critical juncture of their withdrawal from the Indian sub-continent while the Nagas 'clung on to their demand of nothing short of complete independence, fully disregarding the idea of the Crown colony or the Trust territory or any other sort under the supervision of the United Kingdom or the United Nations or any other agency. In this way, the British government lost complete interest and just kept mum to the Nagas' Memorandum except once when the Prime Minister, Lord Attlee had to reply, in a supine way, to a question of Sir Walter Smiles on the Nagas' demand for interim arrangement. However, it was pointed out that the Nagas should make their political stand known to the Advisory Committee on the Tribal Areas of the Constituent Assembly.

Sir Andrew Clow, Governor of Assam (1942-47), an unpretentious, sympathetic man with pleasant nature, found that it was too late for the British to consider anything like Naga independence or Crown colony concept propounded by some of his predecessors, particularly Sir Robert Reid and J P. Mills than what Labour government had decided for India although he knew that co-existence between the peoples of Assam plains and hills in a single political entity was perhaps well-nigh impossible, however inter-dependence between the two was inevitable since they were inseparable in their geography and economy. Moreover, he was confident that the Congress government in power would safeguard the interests of the minorities including the Nagas and let them develop according to their own genius without any imposition or coercion of majority will. So he did not subscribe to the idea of an interim arrangement as demanded by the Nagas.

The Governor, Sir Andrew Clow said in Mokokchung in February 1947 that the British government were withdrawing, the future Government of India, including Assam and its Hills, was a matter for the peoples of the land to decide. The Constituent Assembly which was charged with the duty of working out plans for the future had already started work in Delhi, and it would have to consider in due course the position of the hill peoples. He added that a few of the Nagas had spoken of setting themselves up as a separate nation. But, it was not practicable for any Naga people or even for all of them, to form a separate state, or even a separate province,

if they did that, they would always remain poor and backward; their needs in respect of education, communication, and health could not be met, and they would even lose some of the inadequate service they now were enjoying. He therefore advised that they should aim at reaching an accommodation with the people of the plains of Assam which would be of mutual benefit to both, even if their differences from the people of the plains were many, but the leaders of Assam recognised these differences, and it should not be difficult to ensure that all that was best in their way of life, in their culture, and in their customs, would be preserved within the sphere of local authority which they might expect to enjoy. He further said that they should also remember that there were other hill peoples who were facing the same difficulties, and with whom also they should co-operate. He continued to say that the people of the Nagaland should think not only of what they could secure; they should think also of what they could give; the hill peoples of Assam had had long experience in pure democracy; they understood that democracy did not mean, as some supposed, the rule of the majority, but the rule of the people as a whole; and the Naga people could contribute to the maintenance of democracy in India; they could have a share in the Government of their own land, and as education developed, the Naga people ultimately would make a valuable contribution to the Government as a whole.

At the same time, the Deputy Commissioner Pawsay lost almost all interest for the Naga nation as he found that the conditions were not working in his favour and the Nagas also were obstinate and working feverishly only for sovereign Nagaland with fantastic display of determination partly because of their belief that they had the human right to self-government like other peoples and partly because of the thought that the Indian leaders particularly Mahatma Gandhi who brought the Indian nationalist upsurge to fruition and whose influence went throughout the colonial and free world would support the just cause of the Nagas. However, Pawsay told the Nagas, of all sorts of nations being emancipated, advised them to be united for their own good and instilled the sense of oneness in them. He said, "Changes in the Government of India are on their way, and the Naga Hills too will experience changes. Fortunately here, there is no communal trouble and we shall be spared the bloodshed of Calcutta, Noakhali, Bihar and the Punjab, and if the Nagas will remain united, they will be able not only to administer themselves in a peaceful atmosphere, but will also be able, through unity, to influence the adjoining areas where strife is

prevalent. At all costs, Nagas must remain united. Once division sets in, strength will go...a peaceful atmosphere, universal education, hard work, and above all unity will surely result in the good of all the Naga people." He also used to remind them that they were primitive, naked and sullen minority as part of Indian sub-continent.

Again in a statement issued on 21 May 1947, the Naga leaders called upon the Assamese who had already joined the freedom movement of Congress in pledge for greater India, to form an independent state without joining the Union of India and to work in co-operation with federal Nagaland state. Statement said: "The Nagas who were determined not to allow themselves to be involved in a divided and chaotic India are prepared to declare their own independence, and can only think of entering into a 10-year treaty with an independent Assam." In this way, the firm stand of the extremist Nagas to fight to the last for the independence of their fatherland in 1947 sowed the seeds of freedom revolt and reservation which ultimately sprouted into open fighting during 1950s while the moderate Nagas were sceptic not only of forming a modern sovereign Nagaland but also of forming a full statehood in India.

HYDARI AGREEMENT

On the failure of mission of the Advisory Committee of the Constituent Assembly to arrive at any agreement with the Nagas on the future constitutional set up, Sir Akbar Hydari, ICS, the first Indian Muslim Governor of Assam as the successor of Sir Andrew Clow and a henchman of Jawaharlal Nehru was sent to Kohima on 26 June 1947 to impress upon the Nagas to understand the realities of the situation. Hailing from a distinguished family of Hyderabad, Sir Hydari had an important post at Delhi during the Second World War. As the Governor of Assam, he made some substantial contribution towards solving a number of political and administrative problems of Assam in the wake of the formation of East Pakistan out of Bengal and Assam, formation of NEFA area of the Himalayan tracts out of Brahmaputra valley, the establishment of commercial airport near Gauhati and the first radio station at Shillong. Now the problem of the Nagas was entrusted to him. He arrived at Kohima and was warmly received by the Nagas, and Mr. T.Sakhrie, the Joint Secretary of the Naga National Council, read out a welcome address which said trenchantly:

"Your Excellency,

Occasions of a visit of a Governor of a province to a district are always welcome, in as much as such occasions afford the people

the opportunity to present their problems and desires to the distinguished visitor. This occasion of Your Excellency's visit to Nagaland is specially welcome and the reasons are obvious.

"Your Excellency has undertaken this tour to these hills at a season when the treacherous hillsides make a smooth drive along the hill road uncertain. In this, the Naga people have the assurance that Your Excellency is anxious to meet their desires, and that their case will receive Your Excellency's most sympathetic consideration.

"As is known to Your Excellency, the Naga people have submitted a Memorandum to His Majesty's Government and the Government of India, asserting their right for self-determination and demanding the setting up of an Interim Government of the Naga people for a period of ten years, so as to enable the Nagas to be so schooled as to make a responsible choice at the end of the ten years. Apart from the reply given by the Prime Minister of England to a question of Sir Walter Smiles, seen in the newspaper columns, no reply to this Memorandum of the Naga people has been received. The Naga National Council still looks for a reply, and reiterates the statement made in the Memorandum that: 'A constitution drawn by people who have no knowledge of the Nagaland and the people will be quite unsuitable and unacceptable to the Naga people.' It is our desire to make it plain to Your Excellency that it will not be enough to say in the end that a constitution has been drawn up on the lines suggested by the Cabinet Mission. We know that Your Excellency will concede that the Naga people have as much right for self-determination as any other peoples. Our request to Your Excellency is to do all that is in your power to enable the Nagas to stand on their own feet, so that they may be worthy members of a civilized world.

"When a deputation of the Nagas very recently waited on Your Excellency, Your Excellency was appraised of the demand of the Naga people for the restoration of their old boundary. The ancient boundary with the Ahom kingdom, previously scrupulously observed by the Ahoms, has been overstepped throughout its length. All the valuable forests, previously a part of the Naga Hills have been transferred to Sibsagar district, or Nowgong district; an appendix to this is given. In fairness, justice and equality, Nagaland should be restored to the Nagas, for it is our one great cry that Nagaland should be for the Nagas. We would urge Your Excellency to set up immediately a Boundary Commission to go into this very important question. In giving an outline of our Memorandum to the Subcommittee of the Advisory Committee, we pointed out that Nagaland

should be inalienable. We must state here that any attempt to give away any portion of the Naga Hills to non-Nagas in settlement during this transition period will be most strongly opposed.

"The Naga National Council stands for the solidarity of all the Naga Tribes. The present Naga Hills district has arbitrarily been carved out for administrative convenience only. It is now our desire that Your Excellency takes all steps to bring all the Naga tribes together, for they all naturally desire to be together.

"When the Naga people are seeking aid for their Interim Government, it is only fair and reasonable that they be not deprived of their just share, when the assets of the present Central government of India are divided, and when reparation from Japan (the Naga Hills being the worst sufferer) is received. To this end we would urge Your Excellency to do all that is possible to help us. It is our earnest hope that this first visit of Your Excellency to our Nagaland will not be the last, and that Your Excellency will next see us established according to our desires."

After a series of hectic meetings and discussions with the members of the NNC and the Deputy Commissioner Pawsay for three days—27, 28 & 29 June 1947—on the question of the "Ten Years Interim demand" put forward by the Naga leaders, the Governor Hydari expressed his full sympathy for the legitimate rights of the Naga people to live an honourable life and worked out a compromise formula known as the Hydari Agreement comprising nine points, with the full consent of Mr. Bardoloi and Pandit Nehru.

The Agreement runs:

"That the right of the Nagas to develop themselves according to their free expressed wishes is recognized.

"1. *Judicial* : All cases whether civil or criminal arising between Nagas in the Naga Hills will be disposed off by duly constituted Naga courts according to the Naga customary laws or such law as may be introduced with the consent of duly recognized Naga representative organisations, save that where a sentence of transportation or death has been passed, there will be right of appeal to the Governor. In cases arising between Nagas and non-Nagas in (a) Kohima and Mokokchung town areas, and (b) in the neighbouring plain districts, the judge, if not a Naga, will be assisted by a Naga assessor.

"2. *Executive* : The general principle is accepted that what the Naga National Council is prepared to pay for, the Naga National Council should control. This principle will apply equally to the work

done as well as the staff employed. While the District Officer will be appointed at the discretion of the Governor, Sub-divisions of the Naga Hills will be administered by a Sub-divisional council with a full-time Executive President, paid by the Naga National Council who would be responsible to the District officer for all matters falling within the latter's responsibility, and to the Naga National Council for all all matters falling within their responsibility. In regard to : (a) *Agriculture*: The Naga National Council will exercise all the powers now vested in the District Officer; (b) *C.W.D.* The Naga National Council will take over full control; and (c) *Education and Forest Department*: The Naga National Council is prepared to pay for all the services and staff.

"3. *Legislative* : That no laws passed by the Provincial or Central legislature which would materially affect the terms of this agreement or the religious practices of the Nagas shall have legal force in the Naga Hills without the consent of the Naga National Council. In cases of dispute as to whether any law does so affect this agreement, the matter would be referred by the Naga National Council to the Governor who would then direct that the law in question should not have legal force in the Naga Hills pending the decision of the Central government.

"4. *Land* : That land with all its resources in the Naga Hills should not be alienated to a non-Naga without the consent of the Naga National Council.

"5. *Taxation* : That the Naga National Council will be responsible for the imposition, collection and expenditure of land revenue and house tax and of such other taxes as may be imposed by the Naga National Council..

"6. *Boundaries* : That the present administrative divisions should be modified so as to bring back into the Naga Hills district all the forests transferred to the Sibsagar and Nowgong districts in the past, and to bring back under the unified administrative unit as far as possible all the Nagas. All the areas so included would be within the scope of the present proposed agreement. No areas should be transferred out of the Naga Hills district without the consent of the Naga National Council.

"7. *Arms Act*: The District Officer will act on the advice of the Naga National Council in accordance with the provisions of the Arms Act.

"8. *Regulation*: The Chin Hills Regulations and the Bengal Eastern Frontier Regulations will remain in force.

"9. *Period of Agreement*: The Governor of Assam as the agent of

the Government of Indian Union will have a special responsibility for a period of 10 years to ensure the due observance of this Agreement; and at the end of this period, the Naga National Council would be asked whether they require the above agreement to be extended for a further period or a new agreement regarding the future of the Naga people arrived at."

This Agreement struck a fair balance without an overt promise of the recognition of the sovereign Nagaland in future although the germs of freedom and self determination were contained in it in logic in limited sense in different way. Yet, "the foundation-stone of our cherished goal," Mr. Aliba Imti, the Secretary of the NNC said, "is already laid down. Let the spirit of differences, if there be any, be taken away from your hearts. Come forward with a unified spirit. Let us build a new Nagaland based on the spirit of goodwill and understanding. Let us remember, 'Rome was not built in a day', and let us also remember, 'united we stand, divided we fall'."

The logical corollary was the last clause of the agreement which brought the whole establishment and hope into a lingering controversy and doom. The Government implied that it was a peaceful step to bring the Nagas into the Union of India by their own will in plain course, so as their future was not to be chosen outside India. The Governor, Sir Akbar Hydari, made his intention clear to the Nagas in the same evening of the agreement by stating that after the expiry of ten years, the Nagas might change the administrative pattern within India with a view to securing an honourable place but the refusal of which would be a display of force upon them.

On the other hand, there were divisions between the extremists and moderates within the Naga National Council on the Clause 9 of the agreement. The extremist Nagas read it to mean that after the expiry of ten years, the Nagas would become completely free to choose straight forward their future for independence at the sweet will of the Government of India and to fashion it in accordance with the aspirations and hopes of the people though the Nagas' right to self-determination was not given explicitly in the agreement. The moderates supported it on the ground that it was a democratic and evolutionary step to meet the interests of the Nagas, and was a step ahead towards the self-rule. They also maintained that, "so long as this provision remains effective, the Nagas can maintain their independent national life—for come what Governor may—well or not disposed towards Nagas, this provision guarantees that the agreement will be respected. We look forward

not only to seeing a reunion of Pakistan and Hindusthan, but ourselves with the rest of India. But such a union or reunion is desirable only if it is voluntary. This is exactly what is wanting now, and may be found wanting in 1957 too."

In order to resolve the conflicting views of the extremists and moderates, the issue was voted in the presence of Sir Charles Patwary, the Deputy Commissioner of the Naga Hills, and the majority of the moderates supported the pact, while flamboyant minority led by extremists, was defeated in the Naga National Council. However, the latter declared the agreement to be null and void and strongly stood for independence because they, notwithstanding the Gandhian ideas about living together as good neighbours in a spirit of brotherhood and in peace, respecting the worth and dignity of man, big and small, irrespective of race, language, religion and territorial boundary, apprehended the sentiments of the common Hindus particularly communal organisations like Jana Sangh (People's party), Ram Rajya Parishad, Rashtriya Swayam Sewak Sangh (National volunteer association), Hindu Mahasabha and Arya Samaj (founded by Swami Dyanand Saraswati in 1875) aiming to promote past Hindu civilization and glory rooted in the infallible Vedas. These organisations were working for the Hindu India and if any such communal party came in power, defeating the secular Indian National Congress, the Nagas to be in India would mean extinction of their race, philosophy of life (Nagaism) and assimilation to Hinduism and Hindu society. This fear was added life by the actively hostile propaganda of the Christian missionaries against Hindu religion and the Muslims' propaganda that the Nagas would not be allowed to eat cow, dog, pork, etc. by the Hindu and Muslim rulers, in spite of Jawaharlal Nehru's promise that the Nagas would live in their own ways without slightest interference from the Government of India as India was formed by the different ethnical peoples having different races, languages and cultures. These differences augured serious complications in any plan of action within the house of the Naga National Council although both moderates as well as extremists stood, with difference in emphasis, for political Naga independence and Nagaism.

But the Naga National Council as a whole sent a telegram to the Government of India on 14 August 1947 the day the Nagas celebrated as their Independence Day, with great sanctity according to Christian and animist genna for its stand behind the agreement. It stated that, "Naga Hills cannot be considered part of the Indian Union until heads of proposed agreement between the

Governor of Assam and the Naga National Council are accepted to the letter for execution, with the Clause 9 modified as, "at the end of this period the Nagas will be free to decide their own future". The Government remained indifferent to consider the demand contained in this telegram concerning modification of Clause 9 maintaining that Nagaland was a part of the British India and thus it could not consider any separatist movement in Nagaland as the British government had transferred power to free India including Nagaland. Then the Naga National Council also became firm in its commitment to Clause 9 as therein lay the real safeguard for the interests of the people after the Naga delegation's talks with the Indian leaders in New Delhi could not produce any fruit. Afterwards what the Nagas did was that they decided 14 August 1947 as their independence day from the British government like Pakistan. Meanwhile, the Naga Hills administration was taken over by the Indians particularly the Assamese from the British hands. Rani Guidiliu also was released after she had spent 14 years in jail. She was subsequently given a political sufferer's pension by the Assamese government for her implied freedom movement in Nagaland.

After the agreement remained in abeyance for nearly one year, a delegation of the Nagas called on the Governor, Sir Akbar Hydari at Shillong on 22 June 1948 to clarify whether the agreement would be implemented or not, since different interpretations of the Clause 9 were found to be in circulation. The Governor and the Prime Minister, G.N. Bardoloi gave a written assurance to the delegation as there was absolutely no cause for nursing unfounded fears and doubts. "Deputation of Naga Gentlemen have come", ran the full statement of the assurance, "to Shillong to receive a written assurance from His Excellency, the Governor of Assam and the Hon'ble Premier of Assam, to the effect that the agreement reached between His Excellency and the Naga leaders in June 1947, will be implemented. The deputation was given a hearing by both His Excellency and the Honourable Premier and were given assurance by both that there was never any question of non-implementation of the agreement. A misunderstanding had appeared to have arisen in the minds of certain sections of the Naga people that the agreement of June 1947, was nullified by the provisions laid down in the draft constitution. It was explained to the deputation at length that the draft constitution was in no way inconsistent with the agreement. On the contrary, it is prescribed into action. If, however, there still remains any doubt or apprehension in the minds of the Naga people regarding the validity of the agreement, His Ex-

cellency and the Hon'ble Premier were prepared to give the written assurance that had been asked for. They have been pleased to do so accordingly and have both appended their signature to this document as a token of the assurance they have been asked to give".¹

But distrust and dissatisfaction abated very soon after Sir Akbar Hydari died of a stroke caused by high blood pressure on 28 December 1948 and buried at Kangla in the compound of the ancient palace of Meiteiland. Bardoloi, the Premier of Assam also quite unhappily told the Nagas on 9 November 1949 that the Hydari agreement was no longer considered to be in existence by the Indian government. Ultimately in this way the agreement now became obviously a scrap of paper. On 28 November 1949 a Naga delegation met the last Governor-General of India, Mr. Rajagopalachari, a Madras Brahmin whom Gandhi once called "keeper of my conscience", demanded freedom of Nagaland and expressed their willingness for cordial friendship of India. Giving the deputation a patient hearing, the Governor-General replied that, "India wants to be friendly with you. India does not want to deprive the Nagas of their land. The Nagas are at full liberty to do as they like, either to become part of India or be separated if that would be best for their interest to be isolated." The *Hindusthan Standard* on 30 November 1949 commented that "His Excellency, the Governor-General of India, Shri C. Rajagopalachari, received the 'spear of peace' from the representatives of the Naga tribes. A section of the tribes expressed their fear that the new Constitution did not give them the same autonomy as they had been enjoying hitherto and would not, therefore, be acceptable to them as it would jeopardise their rights to land. They were eager to be friends of India, but they could not give up their lands."

But the Naga National Council dominated by the extremists, stood stubbornly for the sovereign Nagaland as its final goal. Ultimately, at the failure of the ratification of agreement by the Constituent Assembly of India, for obvious reasons, the agreement came to a completely dead end, but gave rise to another form in the Sixth Schedule of the Constitution. The effect of its break-down tremend-

¹ Earlier, Mr. N. N. Rustomji, Adviser to the Governor of Assam wrote on 11 June 1948 to Mr. T. Aliba Imti about the agreement as follows: "With reference to your letter dated May 25, 1948, to His Excellency, the Governor of Assam, I am desired by His Excellency to state that the Agreement is certainly to be implemented and that the machinery necessary to that end is already in motion. There was never, nor shall be, any question of non-implementation of the terms of the Agreement."

ously increased mutual fears and suspicions. The radical Nagas lost no time in forging unity among themselves for armed rebellion on the secessionist line everywhere in Nagaland.

Meanwhile, the Premier Bardoloi attributed the Naga freedom movement to the elusive concept of Crown colony as he found unintelligently. "We are really pained to learn that the former Governors of Assam and their supporters have been advocating in England and in other places for a 'Crown colony' to be formed with the entire hill regions of Assam and the northern hill regions of upper Burma. After going through the administrative files, I have fully come to understand that the then rulers in Delhi made a plan to form such a 'Crown colony', because they foresaw the possibility of such a colony. The separatist tendency was firmly rooted in the minds of the hill people."¹

NAGAS AND MAHATMA GANDHI

The Naga leaders had always entertained great faith in Mahatma Gandhi, the Father of Indian nation and fervently hoped that he would do something for the Naga people. They knew Gandhiji as one who fought relentlessly for right, justice, equality, freedom, humanity, against the racial discrimination, imperialism and colonialism by means of love, truth, non-violence and peace, for India and the world and who had demonstrated a deep grip on the cardinal virtues of all religions—Hinduism, Christianity, Islam and Buddhism, without recourse to Machiavellian, Marxian and modern diplomatic tricks and deceptions for attaining his objective as the latter in the long run, would bring destruction, enmity, hatred and bitterness and spoil the sweetness of success.

Mahatma Gandhi, whose existence would be hardly believed by the future generations as opined by Albert Einstein, was born on 2 October 1869 to Karamchand and Putlibai of Porbandar, a tiny principality in the Kathiawar peninsula in western India. After having qualified himself for the Bar in London, he went to South Africa and practised law for twenty years for the suffering Indians and Africans under the imposed policy of *apartheid* by Whites. It was here, Gandhi carried out successfully the *Satyagraha*, a truthful stand supported by one's soul force and conviction about the rightness of one's cause. He returned to India in 1915, toured throughout India as far as Assam, found the Indian political situation as one of oppressive misrule and suppression of democracy and swore to fight against it.

At that time, the Indian National Congress was healing the schism

¹ Sri Chaliha Prag. *An Outlook on N.E.F.A.*, Calcutta. 1958, p. 57.

between moderates and extremists out of the means to be adopted for the Indian independence. The extremists led by B. G. Tilak, Aurobindo Ghosh and Lajpat Rai declared to achieve *Swaraj* or self-rule as the birthright of the people by any means, while the moderates or liberals led by Gokhale wanted to tread cautiously and were gaining an upper hand through the faint and surreptitious support of the British government. British India was involved in the World War I much against her wishes. After 1920 onwards the Indian leadership passed on to Mahatma Gandhi. On his way the Muslims came out with the demand for a separate Muslim nation, under the leadership of Muslim League. The bad blood let loose by whipping of communal frenzy brought about communal riots, for which Gandhi condemned vehemently and made great dedicated efforts for communal harmony, a task in which he ultimately failed. Not only Gandhi did a yeoman's service to ameliorate the lot of "untouchables" who paradoxically did the menial work for the high castes of the Hindu society, that practised untouchability. He denounced the high-caste prejudices which were responsible for many an evil that had crept into Indian society and had eaten up its vitality. It was, as a result of his enterprise, leadership and sweat that India got freedom in 1947.

Earlier, Mahatma Gandhi visited Assam in 1921, 1926, 1934 and 1946, but failed to contact the Nagas on account of restrictions imposed by the British government on the entry into the excluded Naga areas. Nor did the commonplace Nagas know what Gandhi was fighting for independence including the Nagas also when the British completely kept them away from the political movement of India. As such, the Nagas thought that they were different from India and what the national leaders of India struggled for freedom was not for them but for themselves and the British were creating a comfortable place for the Nagas, an illusion which later on coiled the Nagas into disappointment when the British told them that they could not do anything for them separately on the understanding that they (the Nagas) were Indians as Nagaland was treated as an integral part of British India.

On 19 July 1947 a Naga delegation consisting of nine members met Mahatma Gandhi at his Bhangi colony residence in New Delhi and presented the historical facts in their views as to how the Nagas were conquered by the British and placed into British India. They also told him that the Nagas were determined to have by all means complete independence and not to join the Indian Union and asked his opinion about it. The points of introduction and discussion given by the Naga leaders to Gandhi were:

"Sir, a Naga Delegation is in Delhi proposing to wait on you. We have been instructed by your Secretary to place before you the purpose of our meeting you. You will kindly find below the reason of our seeking an interview with you.

"Introduction: The Nagas are from a country in the North-East Frontier of India which "lies between two huge countries, namely, India and China", to use Pandit Nehru's words; the Nagas were independent before the British advent; they were first attacked by the British government in the year of 1819; they fought the British for 30 years for their independence; the last battle was fought in 1879 and the Nagas were conquered; the Nagas (British subjects) demanded for independence in 1929 when the Simon's Statutory Commission visited Kohima, Headquarters of the Naga Hills; the Naga Hills has been a totally "*Excluded Area*" since the 1935 Act came into force; again in 1946, the Nagas demanded for complete independence when the British decided to withdraw from India; an interim arrangement on the lines of district autonomy has been offered to the Nagas by the Authorities, and the Nagas have rejected it; the Nagas fought for independence when the British threatened to take away their independence, back in 19th century; again, the Nagas resisted Japanese with all their might in 1944 for independence; this demand of the Nagas for independence is not the opinion of a dewan or a ruler (the Nagas have no ruler, and the British are going); it is the will of the people; *The Nagas shall declare Independence on the 14 August 1947*

"Points of Discussion: The Nagas are determined to have complete independence. They are determined not to join the Union. They will all die before losing their independence.

"Will the Government of India use force to bring the Nagas under the Indian Union? Has anyone under the sun the right to take away their independence? Not with justification. But is Might still Right?"

At this meeting Mahatma Gandhi, keeping in mind his dream of India based on the foundations of love, brotherhood and non-violence but free from exploitation, coercive government and a centralized economy that the Indian government would establish once India became free and the Nagas like all others were to be treated with honour, told the Naga delegation that "Nagas have every right to be independent. We did not want to live under the domination of the British and they are now leaving us. I want you to feel that India is yours. I feel that the Naga Hills are mine, the matter must stop there. I believe in the brotherhood of man, but I do not believe in force or forced union. If you do not wish to join

the Union of India, nobody will force you to do that". When the Naga delegates pointed out that the Assam Governor, Sir Akbar Hydari was threatening to use force against the Nagas in case they refused to join Indian Union, Gandhi exclaimed: "Sir Akbar is wrong! He cannot do that...I will come to the Naga Hills; I will ask them to shoot me first before one Naga is shot."¹ However, he told them to follow the way of non-violence for the pursuit of their goal.

After this memorable interview, the Nagas could not seek any more for his advice when they were in difficulty as on 30 January 1948 Gandhiji was shot by a Hindu fanatic Godse, misunderstanding the humanitarian outlook of Gandhi on Hindu-Muslim brotherhood as unduly tilted in favour of the Muslims, when he was going for his usual syncretic prayer attendance and died with the utterance of "He Rama" (O God) on his lips.

But "on that historic day", a memorandum of the Nagas to the President of India on 1 November 1957 says: "the Naga delegation discussed the affairs of the Nagas fully with the Father of the Indian nation, and they made the Naga position clear to him without ambiguity...What he said was not a sudden impulse of the willingness of the Father of a great nation trying to be obliging. He was sincere. He saw the inalienable right of the Nagas which should not be violated. We took his word as final as far as Nagaland and India were concerned. Gandhiji interpreted not only his own good nature, but it was in full confirmation of the politically and publicly avowed policy of the great Indian National Congress not to be a party to coercion. And in this he was undoubtedly upholding the attributed national tradition of India as a country which claims to love not peace alone but "she had never waged war against any nation." The glory and the pride of India was more important to Gandhiji, and thus he laid the corner-stone to build up a greater heritage for future India." But Gandhiji and his era came to an end, leaving Gandhism behind forever. Now the Nehru era had begun in India.

CONSTITUENT ASSEMBLY AND ITS CONSTITUTION

Following the backbone of the mighty British empire broken by the World War II and the weight of the rising nationalist movement, the British imperialism could no longer keep India under its sway in

¹ Reprinted from *The Fate of the Naga People: an Appeal to the World* by Z. Phizo, in *Documents on Indian Affairs 1960*, edited by Gija Kumar and V.K. Arora, New Delhi, 1965. p. 108.

spite of Winston Churchill's adherence to maintain it tenaciously somehow. So on 15 August 1947 the sun of the mighty British empire where it never set really set forever.

Right since early forties, the Congress increased the tempo of popular struggle against the British with the celebrated slogan 'Quit India'. Already exasperated with the Congress the British government arrested its leaders whereas the Muslims succumbed to a succinct voice 'Divide and Quit'. At the same time, the political situation in Britain changed. The Churchill government, tough to the demand of Indian independence, was voted out and the Labour party led by Lord Clement Attlee was returned in power and it decided to transfer sovereign power to the Indians and to resume discussions where the Conservative government had broken down. The Cabinet Mission headed by Lord Pethick-Lawrence, Sir Stafford Cripps and A.V. Alexander arrived in India on 24 March 1946 "to make the utmost endeavours to help India to attain her freedom as speedily as fully as possible...to make the transition as smooth and easy as possible,"¹ and persuaded both the Congress and Muslim League to accept a loose federation short of partition, in lieu of conceding a sovereign Pakistan.

On 25 October 1946 the Indian government was set up and the Constituent Assembly in December set to frame a constitution acceptable both to the Hindus and Muslims, according to the Cabinet Mission Plan. After the departure of the Cabinet Mission June 29, the Muslim League suspicious of the Constituent Assembly on the basis of the two nations' theory— a theory that Muslims were culturally and religiously a distinct group, as such they were neither Hindus nor Indians but a nation which should seek their fulfilment in a state of their own, refused to attend its opening meeting on December 9, and also denounced its further meetings as 'void, invalid and illegal' whereas Congress members attended it, in accordance with their earlier acceptance of the terms of the Cabinet Mission's statement, namely the task of elected Constituent Assembly to frame constitution, the partition undesirable, its refusal to hand power over to the two entirely separate sovereign states, and its advocacy for a loose federation.

However, the Cabinet Mission's proposals failed to reconcile the two intransigent interests of the Hindus and the Muslims. With the talks between the British government, Pandit Nehru and Jinnah in London breaking down, sanguinary communal riots, strikes, demonstrations and repeated² parades erupted in Bengal, Punjab and other

¹ Lord Clement Attlee's speech in the House of Commons, March 15, 1946.

parts of the country with 2,00,000 human lives lost in the graveyard of destruction and death.¹ Faced with such crisis British government chose to act decisively in order to avoid the civil war and declared the partition as an inevitable solution that had broken the deadlock between the two. Meanwhile, Lord Mountbatten succeeded Lord Wavell² as the last Viceroy of India in March 1947 and declared that the British government would recognise the existence of India on 15 August with Lord Mountbatten as its Governor-General and Pakistan on 14 August with Mohammad Ali Jinnah as its Governor-General.

In the process of framing the Constitution, the Advisory Committee on Tribal Areas headed by Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel and Gopinath Bardoloi was given the sole responsibility of advising on the future administration of the tribal and Excluded areas inhabited by the hill peoples of Assam. The members of the Sub-Committee of the Advisory Committee for Assam, consisting of Mr. Bardoloi, (Chairman), Rev. J.J.M. Nichols-Roy, Mr. Rup Nath Brahma, Mr. Mayangnokcha and Mr. A.V. Jhakkar, had "the power to co-opt two members from each tribal or Excluded area under its consideration to assist it in its task." The Committee visited Kohima between 19 and 21 May 1947 in order to see conditions there for themselves, and to afford the representatives of the area the opportunity, not only of placing before the Sub-Committee the relevant facts and circumstances of their own wishes, but also of associating themselves with the Sub-Committee in its task...to take into consideration the freely expressed desires and wishes of the people and to shape the Constitution so as to meet them to the fullest extent possible." In the welcome speech to the Committee, T. Sakhrie, Secretary of the Naga National Council said: "You have come to find from us the desire of the Naga people on the question of how their land should be governed when British power withdraws from India. I am sure members of the Naga National Council and the members of the various Tribal Councils who are all present in this house, will make your task easy, in what the Nagas are indivisible and have one voice. I hope you will do all in your power to help the Nagas achieve their demand "

The Committee was to deal with the Naga National Council as the only overall political party in the Naga Hills which had unfortunately a different goal than that of the Committee expected. The

¹ Sec, Azad, Maulana Abul Kalam, *India Wins Freedom*, Calcutta, 1959: E.P. Moon, *Divide and Quit*, London 1961, p. 298.

² *Viceroy's Journal*, London, 1973

Council reiterated their demand for complete independence after the expiry of ten years under the guardianship of either the British or Indian government with the finance for development and for defence purposes. The ten-year interim government of the Naga people proposed by the NNC included the terms as follows: "1. The Interim Government of the Naga people will be a government by the Naga people, having full powers in respect of legislation, executive and judiciary. 2. Nagaland belongs to the Naga people and will be inalienable. 3. The Interim Government of the Naga people will have full powers in the matter of raising revenue and expenditure, an annual subvention to cover the deficit being given by the Guardian power. 4. For defence and for aiding civil power in case of emergency a force considered necessary by the Naga National Council will be maintained in Nagaland by the Guardian power. That force will be responsible to the Naga National Council who will in turn be responsible to the Guardian power."

The Sub-Committee then raised the following points: "1. Whether you would like to be related with the legislature of the Guardian power, or the Provincial, and if so under what terms of franchise? 2. Whether for the future protection of your interests and administration of your Government you would not like some representations in the Ministry? 3. Whether there should not be separate financial statement in reference to the administration of the Naga Hills on which your members of the legislature, if there be any, could exercise any degree of criticism and control for the improvement of your area? 4. Whether you would not like another body chosen from among your and other people in order to advise the executive of the province for purposes of carrying out the administration in your area and to your best advantage? 5. We assume that you shall have autonomy in your areas but to what extent should that autonomy extend? 6. Whether you should have any representation in the services of the Guardian power or the Province with which you shall have some relationship for the common development of your areas as well as the Province of the Guardian power? 7. You have stated that the land of the Nagas is theirs. The question will arise as to how that land could be efficiently maintained for the Nagas themselves."

In this way, the Committee discussed the future of the Naga people as stated in the memorandum captioned as "*An Appeal to Her Majesty's Government and the Government of India*." Mr. Mayangnoksa, a Naga member of the Sub-Committee stated on behalf of the NNC that the British government and the Government of India

should jointly give them a government of the Naga people and by the Naga people without any disturbance from outside. It was pointed out to him by the Chairman, Bardoloi, that according to the constitutional proposals, a constitution had soon to be drawn on the basis of which a treaty would be entered into by the British government with the Government of India but the Nagas it seemed, were asking for something to be settled before that treaty could be drawn up. Further, the inclusion of certain areas outside the Naga Hills district and outside British India i.e. Burma in the memorandum had complicated the matter. For all these practical difficulties, the Sub-Committee deprecated their stand-point and could not come into agreement with the Nagas.

Thereafter, it is interesting to read what R.K. Ramadhayani, ICS, Secretary of the Committee observed : "At the time of the visit of the Committee, we had come across reports and copies of letters purporting to have been written to well known British Conservative leaders and then Prime Minister of the United Kingdom regarding the Naga cause. It had also been reported that British officers had thought of separating the tribal areas from the rest of India declaring them a separate dominion, if not a separate state, under the protection of British government. At the time of the Committee's visit to Kohima the British Deputy Commissioner of the district was absent from headquarters, having had to lead an expedition to punish certain head-hunting Nagas, and ostensibly therefore the Naga National Council was acting on its own initiative ¹".

But the Sub-Committee of the Advisory Committee recommended the following to the Constituent Assembly awaiting the opinion of the Naga National Council:

"The Naga members desired that so far as the Naga Hills district was concerned the Sub-Committee should recommend the understanding said to have been reached between the Naga National Council and H.E., the Governor of Assam to the Constituent Assembly for acceptance in that exact form. They said that this was what the Naga National Council desired and that they had no authority to agree to anything else. They agreed that the proposals of the Sub-Committee substantially covered the various points on which an understanding was said to have been reached. The draft of a new paragraph as follows was read out: 'We have referred earlier to the Memorandum sent by the Naga National Council to the Government of India. It will be seen from the record of the evi-

¹ *Current Events*, Delhi, May, 1958, p. 33.

dence taken at Kohima that we could not obtain the views of the Naga National Council on a number of important points. Since our visit to Kohima, a question regarding the position of the N.E. Frontier Excluded Areas was asked in the House of Commons, and it was answered by the Prime Minister Attlee to the effect that the areas were a part of Assam, and that their future administration was under consideration by the Constituent Assembly. His Excellency, the Governor of Assam also visited Kohima and had discussion with the Naga National Council. We find that the recommendations made by us cover in essence the measure of autonomy contemplated by the Nagas, and go much farther in some respects. The Nagas in particular expressed it as their will that there should be a review of the position at the end of ten years. We find that the original scheme contained in the State Paper of 16 May 1947 contemplated a review of the constitution after ten years and recommended therefore that the demand of the Nagas be provided for.'

'It was pointed out that if this paragraph was accepted, it would amount to a definite recommendation that the desire of the Nagas that a review of the whole position after a period of ten years should be accepted.

'Mr. Aliba Imti expressed his objection: (a) That the agreement itself was not acceptable to the Committee as the basis of future relations with the Nagas; (b) That the proposal of the Sub-Committee treated the Naga Hills district as a part of Assam and not as an independent area; (c) That they contemplated representation of the Naga Hills district in the Provincial legislature which the Naga National Council did not desire; (d) That the proposals empowered the Governor to dissolve the Naga National Council in certain circumstances; (e) Mr. Aliba said also that he was prepared to discuss the matter further with the Naga National Council who would probably be willing even to send a delegation to Delhi for further discussions.

'Mr. Khelhoshe, for his part, did not wish to express any views without further consultation with the Naga National Council.'

The Sub-Committee also found that the hill tribes of Assam more or less had different approaches to their own problems.

'Though the Constituent Assembly Secretariat and we ourselves issued a leaflet to provide information and create interest in the political future of India, the Constituent Assembly functions and the objects of our tour, the hill people, even of the Excluded Areas, were not found lacking in political consciousness. Perhaps not without instigation by certain elements, this consciousness has even instilled ideas of an independent status the external relations under which

would be governed by treaty or agreement only. *In the Lushai Hills district* the idea of the Superintendent who constituted himself the President of the "District Conference" which he himself had convened, (see para 5 part II) was that the district should manage all affairs with the exception of defence in regard to which it should enter into an agreement with the Government of India. A "Constitution" based on this principle was later drafted by the Conference. (The great majority of the Lushais however cannot be regarded as holding these views and it is doubtful if the District Conference represents the views of anybody other than certain officials and chiefs). *In the Naga Hills*, although the original resolution as passed by the Naga National Council at Wokha contemplated the administration of the area more or less like other parts of Assam, a demand was subsequently put forward for "an Interim Government of the Naga people" under the protection of a benevolent "Guardian power" who would provide funds for development and defence for a period of ten years after which the Naga people would decide what they would do with themselves. Here again it seems to us clear that the views of a small group of people, following the vogue in the Naga Hills, of decisions being taken by general agreement and not by majority gained the acceptance of the National Council, for little more purpose than that of presenting a common front. In other areas more moderate views prevail. *In the Garo Hills* the draft constitution asked for all powers of government including taxation, administration of justice, etc. to be vested in the legal council and the only link proposed with the Provincial government was in respect of a few subjects like higher education, medical aid, etc., other than the subjects of defence, external affairs and communications which were not provincial subjects. *In the Mikir Hills and in the North Cachar Hills* which are the least vocal and advanced of the areas under consideration, there would probably be satisfaction if control over land and local customs and administration of justice is left to the local people. *The Khasi Hills'* proposals were for a federation of the States and British portion; otherwise the proposals were similar to those made for the Garo Hills. A feeling common to all of the Hill districts is that people of the same tribe should be brought together under a common administration. This has led to a demand for rectification of boundaries. The Lushais want the Kukis of Manipur and other areas in their boundaries, the Nagas want the Zema areas of the North Cachar Hills included in their district and so on."

Here, the Committee also faced another elusive and challenging problem as to how the Assam hill peoples would be integrated

into the broader Indian society and political system. However, examining thoroughly the various stand-points of the hill people, the Committee finally came to the conclusion, in a broad way touching the spirit of the constitution and among the other things, recommended that "all the tribes of Provinces other than Assam, whether living in the plains or in the partially excluded tracts, should as one whole be treated as a minority. As regards Assam, conditions in the hill districts of which the Naga Hills, the Lushai Hills and the North Cachar Hills, have been excluded are on a totally different footing and the atmosphere, particularly in these Excluded areas, is one which is not be found elsewhere. These areas must, therefore be treated separately from the rest."¹

Taking note of the recommendation of the Advisory Committee on Tribal Areas on the Excluded and Partially Excluded Areas, the makers of the Constitution placed all the tribal areas including the Naga Hills in the Article 244 of the Constitution that makes the provisions of the Fifth and Sixth Schedules. Let us examine them as briefly as possible in the relevance of the Naga Hills.

The Fifth Schedule of the Constitution applies to the administration and control of the Scheduled Areas and Scheduled Tribes in any state than the state of Assam whereas the provisions of the Sixth Schedule shall apply to the administration of the tribal hill areas of Assam.² The administration of such Scheduled areas is to be governed by the state government under the direction of Central government; the Governor of such a state shall make an annual report to the President regarding their administration. Any law shall normally apply to Scheduled Areas unless the Governor directs that any particular law shall not do so; the Governor can also make regulations for the peace and good government of any Scheduled area, like prohibition or regulation of the transfer and allotment of land among the members of the Scheduled Tribes and control of money. Finally Parliament is empowered to make addition variation, and repeal (cancellation) of any of the provisions of the Schedule.

Under the Sixth Schedule of the Constitution, the Hill districts of Assam like the United Khasi-Jaintia Hills, the Garo Hills, the Lushai (Mizo) Hills, the Naga Hills, the North-Cachar Hills and the Mikir Hills, placed in Part A became autonomous districts with dis-

¹ *Constituent Assembly of India*, November 4, 1948, p. 202.

² According to the 1971 census, there are 80 million Scheduled Castes and 38 million Scheduled Tribes, i.e., 25% or nearly one-fifth of the total of about 570 million population of India.

trict Councils for the administration of the matters specified in the Schedule, whereas the North-East-Frontier tract including Balipara Frontier tract, Tirap Frontier tract, Abor Hills district and the Naga Tribal area were included in Part B. The District Council of a district shall consist of not more than 24 members, of whom not less than three-fourth are elected on basis of adult suffrage. In addition, the districts shall have representation in the state legislature of Assam by which some of them were represented in the state government as ministers and deputy ministers. The main provisions of the Schedule apply only when the Governor may, with the prior approval of the President, make all or any of those provisions applicable. Yet, the administration is run by the President, through the Governor of Assam acting in his discretion, as his agent.

The powers of the District Council include making laws regarding the protection of land and agriculture, the management of village forests except Reserved Forests, the use of canals and water-courses for the purposes of agriculture, the regulation of shifting cultivation, the establishment of village councils, the appointment of succession of chiefs or headmen, the inheritance of property, marriage laws and social customs, any laws made must be submitted to the Governor and receive his assent before they can become effective.

The Sixth Schedule also gives recognition to the importance of the traditional Tribal Councils and the courts established by the District Councils are given certain powers under the code of criminal procedure. The District Councils are also authorised to establish, construct, or manage primary schools, dispensaries, markets, cattle-pounds, ferries, fisheries, roads and waterways and, in particular, may prescribe the language and the manner in which education shall be imparted in primary schools. They have the power to levy taxes on professions, taxes on animals, taxes on entry of goods into markets, etc. Moreover, they can make regulations for the control of money-lending and trading by non-tribals, a power given to safeguard against the economic exploitation of the tribes.

Most important of all, the Sixth Schedule lays down that no Act of Assam legislature in respect of any of the above mentioned matters and no Act of the state legislature prohibiting the consumption of any non-distilled alcoholic liquor, shall apply to any autonomous district unless the District Council so directs. Further, as regards other matters also, the Governor may, by public notification, direct that any of Act of Parliament or the Legislature of the state shall not apply to an autonomous district, "or shall apply to such district or any part thereof subject to such exceptions or modifications as he may

specify in the notification."

Apart from the specific dealing of Assam hill tribes including the Nagas, under the Fifth and Sixth Schedules, there are other articles which directly or indirectly deal with them. The Article 275 states that special funds can be made available out of the Consolidated Fund of India. Such sums as Parliament may provide shall be charged on the Consolidated Fund of India each year as grants-in-aid of the revenue of such states as Parliament determines to be in need of assistance, provided that there shall be paid out of the Consolidated Fund of India such sums as are necessary for such state schemes of development aimed at promoting the welfare of the Scheduled Tribes in that state or for raising the level of administration of the Scheduled Areas therein to that of the rest of the areas of the State; similar payments shall be made to the state of Assam for the development of the tribal areas of the United Khasi-Jaintia Hills district, the Garo Hills district, the Mizo district, the Naga Hills district, the North Cachar Hills, and the Mikir Hills. Until Parliament makes provisions under Art. 275, the powers conferred on Parliament therein shall be exercisable by the President, any order made by him having effect subject to any provisions so made by Parliament; the President shall consult the Finance Commission before making such an order. In order to ensure that there is adequate tribal representation both in the legislature and in the services, Part XVI of the Constitution provides for the reservation of seats in the Lok Sabha and the state legislative assemblies for members of the Scheduled Tribes. This provision was originally for a period of ten years but it has recently been extended till now.

Article 335 lays down that the claims of the members of the Scheduled Tribes shall be taken into consideration consistent with the maintenance of efficiency of administration in making of appointments to services and posts in connection with affairs of the Union or a state. Article 338 directs that there shall be a special officer, to be appointed by the President, to investigate the working of the safeguards which are made to protect the interests of the tribes, and Article 339 further directs that the President shall at the expiration of ten years from the commencement of the Constitution, appoint a Commission to report on the administration of the Scheduled Areas and the welfare of the Scheduled Tribes.

Thus, the makers of the Constitution made themselves confident that the Constitution had provided adequate safeguards for the tribal people to protect and preserve their distinct political, cultural, religious and economic interests. Moreover, they could live in their

respective lands in accordance with their ways of life without interference from the non-tribals, but to grow along and within the mainstream of India and modern civilisation without feeling themselves forced out. Here, the Constituent Assembly took a very low line of view on the opposition of the hill leaders to include their territories within Assam and to integrate into Assamese political and administrative system. Had the Assembly made a sort of arrangement which the Central government would bring the entire north-eastern frontiers under its direct rule, the problems of the Nagas, Mizos, etc. probably might not arise and even did, they could have been dealt better imperatively and the tensions of the areas would be less. The Prime Minister Nehru came to realise later on some of mistakes out of it and as late as 1963, he became sceptic of sending the Assamese officers to the hills: "Our bitter experience in Nagaland does not point that way, because officers who were sent to Nagaland, good officers otherwise, were not particularly suited for that purpose. They irritated the Nagas tremendously."¹

But the inclusion of the Nagas into the Sixth Schedule at par with the other hill tribes of Assam took the Nagas by surprise, who considered it as an act of betrayal of agreement reached between the Naga National Council, and Governor Sir Akbar Hydari, and Prime Minister G.N. Bardoloi of Assam in 1947 as stated earlier. The inauguration of the Constitution on 26 January 1950 replaced, step by step, previously existing political arrangements of the British government which had kept the Nagas virtually excluded. The result of the end of the exclusion policy was an influx of merchants and usurers mostly Marwaris from the plains in large numbers than ever before, despite reasonable ban from entry of the Naga Hills under the Inner Line Regulations. They had been allowed to establish shops at Kohima, Mokokchung, Dimapur, etc. for commercial purposes, however, the permanent settlement in these places had been generally forbidden. It also brought with them the lurking fear of exploitation by the advanced people of the plains and the enforcement of the Assam Reserve Forest Act by the Assam government, in the process of administration, and the consequence of that Act would prevent many of the homeless Naga families from clearing the forests to build new homes in the areas which they claimed theirs. Moreover, the Nagas felt that the Constitution offered them no more than the limited power for protection of their land and their ways of life.

With all these apprehensions and doubts, the Naga National

¹ *The National Herald*, March 30, 1963, p.1.

Council strongly committed to a sovereign Nagaland state and threw out the Sixth Schedule of the Constitution while the Khasi-Jaintia Hills, Garo Hills, Mizo Hills and other hill tracts reluctantly accepted the Constitution and elected their representatives to the District Councils and Assam legislature, in spite of their dissatisfaction with the new political and administrative arrangements. Thus when the Constitution came into force, *sans* striking roots in the Naga Hills, the Nagas went their own way. Yet the Assam government more or less followed policies similar to those instituted by the British, though a number of important innovations under the new Constitution were made which further assured the Nagas about Government's pledge regarding protection of their customs, traditions, culture, etc.

NEHRU GOVERNMENT AND THE NAGA HOSTILITY

The activities of the Congress and the charisma of the leadership of Jawaharlal Nehru could not reach the remote hill areas inhabited by primitive tribes beyond the plains of Assam and Manipur owing to the ban imposed by the British government on the entry into these areas as well as due to geographical isolation which made communications extremely difficult. In spite of all these hurdles confronted with a colossal task, Pandit Nehru tried to get acquainted with them, reconcile with them and make them understand what India was fighting for, with great sacrifices. His love for these tribes was more aroused all the more when he met the Khasis, Kacharis, Ravas, Garos, Lalungs, Miris and Nagas in his first visit of Assam in 1937. Here, he came across the mysterious story of a Kacha Naga girl, Guidihu whom he admired as a freedom fighter from the eastern corner of India as already referred to.

Even on the eve of India's independence, Jawaharlal Nehru, President of Indian National Congress came to know the reluctance on the part of some of the Assam hill tribes, particularly the Nagas and the Mizos to join the proposed federal India, in a similar argument by Muslims that had led to the partition of India. Realising Nagaland as one big cluster of the problems, he discreetly declared the free Indian policy towards the Nagas on 1 August 1946 in a letter to T. Sakhrie, Secretary of the Naga National Council which reads as follows:

"It is obvious that the Naga territory in eastern Assam is much too small to stand by itself, politically or economically. It lies between two huge countries; India and China, and part of it consists of rather backward people who require considerable help. When

India is independent, as it is bound to be soon, it will not be possible for the British government to hold on the Naga territory or any part of it. They would be isolated there between India and China. Inevitably, therefore, this Naga territory must form part of India and of Assam with which it has developed much close associations. At the same time it is our policy that Tribal areas should have as much freedom and autonomy as possible so that they can live their own lives, according to their own customs and desires. Thus the solution would be that the Naga territory should be an internal part of Assam province and yet should have a certain measure of autonomy for its own purposes. How this should be worked out is a matter of further consideration between the peoples concerned. So far as I can see, there is no reason why there should be any excluded area apart from the rest. The whole Naga territory should go together and should be controlled in a large measure by an elected Naga National Council. At the same time the Nagas should have representatives in the Assam provincial assembly and should participate fully in the life of the province.

"I am glad that the Naga National Council stands for the solidarity of all the Naga tribes including those who live in the so-called unadministered territory. I agree entirely with your decision that the Naga Hills should constitutionally be included in an autonomous Assam in a free India with local autonomy and due safeguards for the interests of the Nagas.

"As for separate electorates for the Nagas, I am not clear in my mind as to how this will work. Generally speaking, we are against separate electorates as these limit and injure the small group by keeping it separated from the rest of the nation. But if the Naga territory is given a measure of autonomy, some arrangement will have to be made for their proper representation.

"As you know the Congress is opposed to any forcible grouping of Assam with Bengal. We are of the opinion that this is a matter for each province to decide. Assam has already expressed its opinion on the subject. What the future will be, I cannot say, but I cannot conceive of Assam being compelled against its will to form a group with Bengal.

"An Advisory Committee will be elected by the Constituent Assembly. It should have representatives of the Tribal areas and I hope the Tribal territories of Assam will be directly represented on it. The findings and decisions of the Advisory Committee will probably not be finally binding upon the Constituent Assembly but they are bound to carry great weight. I imagine the findings will

be accepted almost in their entirety unless they go against some direct provision in the Constitution.

"As I have said above the Excluded areas should be incorporated with other areas. It may be that certain special provisions for their protection and development will be made. I should like them to be treated as part of the entire Naga territory.

"I see no reason whatever why an extraneous judicial system should be enforced upon the Naga Hills. They should have perfect freedom to continue their village panchayats, tribal courts, etc., according to their own wishes. Indeed it is our wish that the judicial system of India should be revised, giving a great deal of power to village panchayats.

"About the unadministered territory which still contains, according to you, a number of head-hunters, I cannot definitely say how soon and in what manner it should be brought into the province. This is to be devised in consultation with the people concerned. Naturally some special provisions will have to be made to develop these people.

"The question of common language must also be finally decided by the Naga themselves. The only two possible languages which would be helpful to them are Assamese or Hindustani. Most of them know some Assamese already. I think it would be desirable to encourage Hindustani as this will bring them in touch with the various changes and developments taking place in India.

"Assam is still largely undeveloped and there is plenty of room for agricultural, horticultural and industrial development. This development should be so organized as to benefit the people of the soil. Certainly the people of the Naga Hills should not be exploited by others, and their right to own and work on the soil should remain with them. We should be entirely against the development of large estates owned by outsiders there. What form land ownership should take, whether it should be communal, co-operative or kind of peasant proprietorship, should be determined in consultation with the people concerned.

"I might add that I am specially interested in these Tribal areas not only in the north-east of India but in the north-west as well as the centre. They present different problems. I hope that in an independent India there will be special department, both in the Centre and in the provinces concerned, for the protection and advancement of Tribal areas. I do not want them to be swamped by people from other parts of the country who might go there to exploit them to their own advantage."

The Nagas considered Nehru's declaration as a sane one which would fulfil their political aspirations, as elucidated in the Wokha resolution. In the same year, a proposal—Coupland plan—for the formation of a British colony comprising the Naga tribes of the Indo-Burma frontier, which was also earlier made by the British administrators was going on behind the curtain in discussion with the NNC. But unfortunately, the conditions changed from bad to worse. On the eve of independence of India, Muslim League strongly adhered to the two nation theory despite resistance of the Indian National Congress, and finally, when the negotiations went to the dogs, the hope of Hindu-Muslim India that Mahatma Gandhi had nursed all his life was shattered. The country was partitioned, attended with unmatched brutality, arson, loot and rape. The British left India and Pakistan for all after "divide and quit" task had been completed.

The ravages of partition gave birth to the spectre of illusion in the minds of the Nagas that their identity would soon be absorbed either by Islam or Hinduism. This impelled the Nagas to the demand for complete independence than as an autonomous district in India and submitted a number of memoranda to His Majesty's Government and to the Government of India. The fundamental causes of the demand were based on the ground that the Nagas were not Indians and did not want to be Indians; Nagaland was never conquered by India; the British conquered a part of Nagaland and once the British left India it should revert to its original free status of Nagaland.

Like an astute statesman, Pandit Nehru understood that this was the outcome of the constant efforts of the British government to keep the Nagas off from the mainstream of country's life and in consequence they had "never experienced a sensation of being in a country called India". Yet he was not at all prepared to discuss the issue of Nagaland independence except granting it the maximum autonomy within the Indian Union. So he adopted a persuasive and psychological policy to make the Nagas realise that India was their country and theirs was India. He sent the Assam Governor, Sir Akbar Hydari to Kohima where he concluded the famous pact with the Naga leaders. Unfortunately this entente was short-lived and soon became null and void on the point of its interpretation by the parties concerned. A Naga delegation met the Prime Minister Nehru in August 1947 and pressed him to honour the Hydari agreement, entailing the Nagas to have free will in deciding their future. Again, the Naga National Council wrote to Pandit Nehru

on November 4, stating that "the more anxious the Naga people are, the greater is the negligence and unsympathetic attitude of the authorities. For this reason the Naga National Council painfully, and after thorough study of the situation prevailing in our fatherland, decided to render the last chance of co-operation with the Government of India by giving 30 days' time in the form of an ultimatum. If this fails, then the Naga people will not co-operate with the existing Government and Nagaland shall cease to be a part of the Indian Union from 6th December 1947." Meanwhile, the constitution-makers incorporated the political aspirations of the Nagas in the Sixth Schedule of the Constitution for which the Nagas denounced sharply as a breach of trust. By pointing out to the safeguards provided, Nehru told the leaders of the NNC a number of times that Nagaland was a part of India; even 560 princely states ruled over by feudal Chiefs or Rajas and Maharajas under the British suzerainty acceded either to India or to Pakistan; the Nagas too were free and independent as like other Indians; the question did not arise that India maintained similar imperialistic colonial policy pursued by the British, France, Germany, Italy, Portugal, Russia and America in the human history or a forceful policy of Hindunization as the case of Chinization of Tibet from 1950 onwards; even if the Nagaland would become an independent state, it could be absurd, impractical and infeasible.

Soon after Jawaharlal Nehru laid down his articulate basic policy towards the Nagas along with the other tribes of India so as to develop, integrate, preserve, strengthen and bring them into the Union of India "according to their own genius and tradition", in cumulative way, without any kind of imposition of Hinduism, i.e., religion, language, culture, or mode of life and customs, but to teach them to run their own administration without outsiders except some ones teaching. He introduced the development schemes and reforms as to fit their social and cultural institutions to protect them from undue exploitation by the plains—outsiders of the other parts of the country, although access by the Indians to Nagaland was in broader form made easier.

Thus, the Nehru's policy had all along been to give the fullest degree of autonomy and opportunity of self-government to the Naga people without interfering in any way in their internal affairs or way of life, under peculiar geo-historical circumstances.¹ And on the Republic Day message of the Assam Governor, Fazl Ali in 1956 affirmed: "The freedom that India has attained is ultimately in the

¹ Jawaharlal Nehru's statement in the Lok Sabha, August 1, 1960

best interest of not only India as a whole but of the Nagas themselves. This freedom is indivisible and has been embodied in an inviolable Constitution. Under this Constitution, our Naga fellow-countrymen enjoy equality of citizenship and equal opportunities with any other Indian national. The freedom is already there, if only it is understood aright and properly availed of.

“The great and diverse peoples of India, who have throughout campaigned against exploitation, coercion and domination, can be relied upon to uphold the traditions of freedom in all parts of India with their last breath. There is not the least desire on behalf of any one for domination or exploitation. On the other hand, what is sought is fraternal co-operation and mutual prosperity. The Naga Hills being a part and parcel of India, we have always been prepared to accord to our Naga fellow-countrymen the fullest assistance and opportunities for development. Freedom in a narrow and fissiparous sense of the word is really no freedom at all, for it cannot then be concertely transformed into cardinal freedom, that is freedom from want.

“India has a message of peace and well-being for the whole of mankind and the cultural traditions of the diverse people of India are adequately safeguarded under the provisions of the Constitution. The Government of India aims at actively promoting the dissemination of the best cultural traditions and will stamp out human tyranny and violence under whatever pretexts these may be unleashed, for only then can the ties of fraternal co-operation be forged. Only through fraternal interdependence of our peoples can all-round prosperity and progress be achieved.”

In accordance with these declared principles, they were to be approached “in a spirit of comradeship and not like someone aloof who had come to look at them, examine them, weigh them, measure them and report about them or to try and make them conform to another way of life.” At certain stages, Pandit Nehru put his utmost effort to bring his idealistic policy into practical implementation of understanding between the Nagas and the Government. But situation proved too much of helplessness for him, as coupled with years of British pampering of separatist Naga elements and burst into conflict, with a lot of bloodshed ensuing.

Under all the strains of fast changing situation without undermining the other factors also like Assamization and Manipurization, the major unifying change of the Naga politics and philosophy was almost strikingly due to the rise of a new Naga personality namely Zaphu Phizo, the leader of the Naga independence movement. It

was under the influence of his idea that the Nagas were determined to secure freedom first from the goodwill and fraternal offer of India as a condition precedent to the economic, cultural, social development.

Zaphu Phizo was born in Khonoma village in Angami area, in about 1900, where his forefathers fought the Britishers for freedom in 1879. He inherited grim courage from his parents and environment. Almost being self-educated, he rose to power from a position of inconspicuousness. Undoubtedly, he is a man of indomitable spirit, inexhaustible energy, sharp intelligence, deep conviction and somewhat dictatorial temperament possessing political acumen. Rightly or wrongly, he consecrated all these qualities in the advancement of his one single aim—the establishment of the Naga nation and its independence, as he called it aptly. In 1933 Phizo went to Burma and earned his livelihood by doing all sorts of odd jobs. But the Japanese invasion and occupation of Burma in 1942 entirely changed the course of his life. He joined the Indian National Army led by Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose as a corporal and served in it till 1944 in the article of his hope that the success of INA against the yoke of the British rule would mean freedom for India and Nagaland and the Nagas would be independent as before after the British themselves bowed out and would live in peace and harmony with one another.

At the defeat of the INA and the Japanese, the British reoccupied Burma, arrested Z. Phizo and imprisoned him, like many other freedom fighters, in the central jail in Rangoon for seven months for his collaboration with the INA and security risk and his property was confiscated. On his release from there, he returned to Nagaland in June 1946, with his mind full of unwavering determination and revolutionary ideas to achieve political independence for his homeland and to bring Christian socialism to Nagaland. Perhaps, it seems, that he imagined that he would be able to gain it easily on the sweet will of Mahatma Gandhi and Jawaharlal Nehru in co-operation with the British government.

Therefore, Z. Phizo immediately joined the Naga National Council and tried to prevail upon the organisation to lean more towards extremism and wake it from a state of dormancy and moderation to dynamism. This led to the formation of the different opinion groups—the extremists being led by Phizo himself, for complete Nagaland sovereignty and the moderates for a reasonable association with the rest of India until the Nagas were trained enough in the way of modern government. Yet another school of thought asked for a

mandatory state-status for Nagaland under the British authority for some time, that would administer the territory as a trust under the UN trusteeship system. But the Phizoites steadily gathered the momentum and stewardship of the NNC. Its finances were collected under Assam government authority, for the purpose of building an independent government in disguise of social and cultural development of the Nagas. It was at this time, i.e., in June 1947, that NNC issued an ultimatum that Nagaland should become a sovereign independent state when British rule in India ceased on 15 August 1947.

On the eve of the independence, a Naga delegation led by Z. Phizo visited New Delhi and made known their desire to the Government of India to be free from the Indian Union. Shortly after, Sir Akbar Hydari, Governor of Assam visited Kohima and concluded the Hydari agreement in 1947, as stated earlier. But before the ink had dried up, a fresh controversy started over the last point in the agreement. In spite of Sir Hydari's efforts to implement it to the letter, the Constituent Assembly refused to ratify it. This proved to be a good boon to the extremists. At such a critical time of an ideological dispute between the extremists and moderates as to the means to be adopted, either of Machiavellism or Marxism or Jesuism or Gandhism to achieve their objective, Phizo consistently chose the sort of synthesis of all these approaches according to the circumstances as his policy. On the other hand, he was deeply convinced by the Muslim theory of two-nations and the tactics employed by the Muslim League to create Pakistan.

In order to pursue more forceful and single-minded policy, Phizo withdrew from the Naga National Council whose aim at this time modus operandi was circumscribed by constitutional and democratic methods, formed at no time, the People's Independent League for sovereign Nagaland state comprising the Naga Hills, the Tuen-sang Frontier Division and contiguous Naga areas in Assam, Manipur and Burma and made it more extreme, more virulent, more dynamic and purposive, than the moderate NNC. From the time, wordy battle in circumlocution started between the extremists and the moderates of the NNC over the form of action that should be taken to realise their avowed goal.

Simultaneously, Phizo put the quintessence of his quixotic leadership impervious to criticism, toured from one village to another in the Naga inhabited areas to mobilise support for Naga freedom, closed the ranks and inflamed them with the patriotic song which runs as

"God bless my Nagaland
Land that I love dearly,

Stand beside Her and guide Her
Through day and night with light from above,
From the mountains, hill tops
And the valleys where I am
God bless my Nagaland
My home, Sweet home!"

Now developing an air of cheerful confidence which quickly rallied the people to his banner for freedom, Z. Phizo organised a Naga Youth Movement and Naga Women's Society whose members were recruited from among students, Church leaders and young government servants who pledged to fight till the last drop of their blood and liberate their fatherland from Indian "occupation". He ultimately, built up a military force so violently under the pinnacle of his influence from among the ex-servicemen, in the first instance. For all these activities on this noble but difficult height he was incarcerated at Calcutta under the archaic Regulation of 1818 dealing with sedition.

But in 1949 Z. Phizo was set free by the Government on compassionate grounds when his wife and children met a tragic accident while travelling by jeep from Khonoma to Kohima, in which one of his sons was killed and wife was critically injured. Soon after his release, he was unanimously elected the president of the Naga National Council in 1950. The unanimity of his election was attributed more due to the clouds of uncertainty engrossed in the minds of the Nagas out of the failure of the Hydari agreement that the moderates received growing distrust of the people and their stand became deemedly void and of no validity or account. Now the moderate elements, unsuccessful in their bid for the control of the organisation, were expelled and extremists' forces dominated the scene. Phizo put the house of the NNC in order and filled its executive with his own chosen men from the People's Independent League, purged all his opponents who were determined to remain in India at all cost for geographical, economic and political reasons, and strove to make it a militant political organisation pledged to fight for the sovereignty of Nagaland. Besides "it was aided by the Assamese government which recognised Phizo, the NNC President as the representative spokesman of all Naga tribes and even referred to the NNC on some occasions as a legitimate government".¹ Whatever may have been the reasons the separate proclivity of the 1920s now re-emerged as the predominant political impulse under Phizo's leadership as time passed by swiftly. The Naga National Council rejected the Sixth

¹ Marcus F. Franda, *Economic Weekly Annual*, New Delhi, February 4, 1961, p.155.

Schedule of the Constitution as contrary to the spirit of the Hydari agreement. Consequently, the NNC declared that no representative would be sent to the Indian Parliament, and the state legislature of Assam. Instead, Phizo declared his intention of holding a plebiscite on the question of independence of Nagaland as the best method of setting the base up although he had shown that the Constitution of India gave an undoubted security of Naga life and an absolute unmolested opportunity of complete autonomy. He also met the Prime Minister Nehru in April 1950 to press his demand for secession from India.

The Naga National Council conducted plebiscite throughout Nagaland in 1951 to ascertain the views of the people in regard to two basic issues—first, whether they wanted to remain in India or to become a separate independent state¹; and second, to repudiate the charge of the Indian government that Phizo and the NNC were supported by a segment of minority of the Naga people while the majority opted for joining the Indian Union.

The villages were visited by the NYM and NWS collecting signatures or thumb impressions from all adult Nagas along with the administration of oath according to the Naga custom and law that they would put in their last breath to struggle for Naga independence. The result of the plebiscite was claimed to be 99 per cent of the people voted for Nagaland freedom. The plebiscite forms and thumb impressions were sent to the Central government of India, New Delhi. At this time, the attempt to bring the Burmese Nagas into the plebiscite failed when the Burmese Ambassador in India declared in a statement that the border Nagas favoured no plebiscite. But the NNC was convinced that the result of the Plebiscite and verbal support from the other Naga hills was an unalterable mandate and that the Nagas as a whole had become pugnacious for the cause of independence and renewed their confidence to shape their own destiny according to their way.

The unilateral plebiscite conducted by Zaphu Phizo and his men when the Nehru government showed only lukewarm concern to the problem, was a contrivance to prove that the Nagas irrevocably wanted to be independent, but, at the same time, it was used as a show of force in a very subtle fashion by Phizo against the other Nagas who were inclined towards the Government of India.

¹ During this period, the Assam government maintained a *laissez faire* policy in the administration of the Naga Hills. Yet the Assamese Chief Minister, Medhi who was against holding plebiscite was to the contrary advised by the Union Home Minister to wait and see.

The Prime Minister, Jawaharlal Nehru and the Congress President visited Assam in December 1951. A five-man delegation of the Naga National Council led by Phizo met the Prime Minister in the presence of Assam Chief Minister and the Tribal Secretary on a steamer in the Brahmaputra river. In the meeting, the delegation put forward their standpoint for independence as their birth-right and the verdict of the people as decided by the plebiscite. Moreover, they expressed to Nehru their apathy of the Assamese government which still had responsibility for the administration of the Naga Hills. Pandit Nehru recounted to them how India's sovereignty was transferred by the British government and how the processes of integration into Indian Union took place and how subsequently the Naga Hills became a part and parcel of India. Pandit Nehru further said, "I consider freedom very precious. I am sure that the Nagas are as free as I am, in fact more free in a number of ways. For while I am bound down by all sorts of laws, the Nagas are not to the same extent bound down by such laws and are governed by their customary laws and usages. But the independence, Nagas are after, is something quite different from individual or group freedom. In the present context of affairs both in India and the world, it is impossible to consider, even for a moment, such an absurd demand for independence of the Nagas. It is doubtful whether the Nagas realise the consequences of what they are asking for. For their present demand would lead them to ruin". Prime Minister Nehru gave them an assurance also that everything could be possibly done to meet Naga aspirations within the Constitution of the Indian Union and advised them to work it in good spirit although the Nagas were indeed not wringing any concessions from Government except sovereignty. But the most drawback fallen upon the broad policy of Jawaharlal Nehru was the transfer of the "discretionary" power and "individual judgments" exercised by the Governor over the hill areas of Assam as "Excluded Areas" under the 1935 Government of India Act to the Government of Assam which henceforth acted for New Delhi. This step was charged by the Nagas as an intention, apparently of integrating and assimilating of the hill areas into Assam and added fuel in the ferment.

The next step of the Naga National Council was to boycott the general election to the district council, Assam state legislature and Parliament of India in 1952. On 11 March 1952 a stormy interview between the Prime Minister, Pandit Nehru and a three-member Naga delegation took place in New Delhi, in which the former thumped his fist upon the table in exasperation and tantrum at the repellent

mention of sovereignty of Nagaland which appeared to him to be extremely traumatic and heterodoxical and said in scowl that even if heavens fell or India went into pieces, the Nagas would not be given independence. This remark, however, rented in revolutionary spleen, received as a bitter insult in their inmost feelings, but did not daunt them. Rather in an vigorous and stimulated voice in reply to his words, the delegation told the Prime Minister Nehru the determination of the Nagas to continue to struggle for freedom through the peaceful and non-violent methods, obviously the ones primarily of Mahatma Gandhi and Jesus Christ.

Again, when the Prime Minister, Pandit Nehru was visiting Manipur in 1952, he came at Mao, a Naga hill of Manipur situated at the exact border between Manipur and the Naga Hills, about 24 miles from Kohima. Here a Naga deputation (sent by Phizo) met the Prime Minister who told them categorically that the Government was not prepared to discuss with the Nagas on the issue of the Naga sovereignty any more. In the same year in August the Naga National Council declared its decision to have no truck with the Indian administration. The situation continued to worsen, neither side showing signs of relenting from its stand. At the moment Z. Phizo quietly left Nagaland on December 1952 to establish contacts with the rest of the world, to raise the Naga independence question before the United Nations, to make their voice heard or studied, and he reached the Union of Burma. But the Burmese police intercepted him and discovered several documents from him. He was sent back by the Burmese police to Nagaland but was not handed over to the Indian authorities.¹

On 30 March 1953 a flagrant accident struck at a public meeting arranged by the Nagas to welcome the Indian Prime Minister, Pandit Nehru and the Burmese Prime Minister, Thakin U Nu. The two Prime Ministers accompanied by Mrs. Indira Gandhi, T. N. Kaul and B.N. Mullik had come to Kohima after their visit to Imphal. The Nagas gathered there in order to give a rousing public reception on their arrival. On this occasion, the Nagas also attempted to submit a memorandum and speak to Nehru about their demand for independence. The Assamese Deputy Commissioner, Barkataki disallowed any address either in speech or in writing at the public meeting, and told the Nagas to listen what the two Prime Ministers would say and forbade them to meet and talk with Nehru. The Nagas raised hue and cry against the Deputy Commissioner, became furious

¹ See Mullik, B.N., *My Years with Nehru* (1948-1964), New Delhi, 1972, pp. 294-336.

thinking as if it were Nehru's words not to grant them audience and hysterically walked out of the meeting at which the Prime Minister Nehru was about to speak before the Nagas. Pandit Nehru felt shocked and put the blame upon the Chief Minister, Bishnuram Medhi who in turn fired the Deputy Commissioner.¹ In this way, the meeting ended in hurly burly. It was one very good occasion of establishing a rapport with Naga people but was lost chiefly because of bureaucratic bungling under the shabby policy of Assam government and because of the demonstration of the Nagas' age-old suspicions and animosities against the Assamese than an insult to the Prime Ministers. Then from there they flew to Singkaling-Hkamti, headquarters of the Burmese Naga Hills district and stayed there for two days, during which they met the head-hunting Nagas and observed the Naga oaths sworn by touching a tiger teeth and chewing a bit of the bones of their ancestors and pledged not to wage war again.

After this frigid episode the Central government was taking the chance to deal with the situation itself. But the worst came when it was in the air that the police were preparing a list of suspects to be arrested for the maintenance of law and order. This invidious rumour allied with fears, forced the Naga leaders to go underground. Accordingly the police raided the house of Sakhrie, the Secretary of the Naga National Council on the night of April 4. The monthly newspaper of the NNC, "*Naga Nation*" or "*Naga Herald*" was banned by the Government during the same year as an anti-India propaganda organ. Thereafter almost all the important members of the Naga National Council went underground and prepared for the armed insurrection. A few days later, Viswema, Jakhama, Kigwema and Phesama villages were indiscriminately ravaged by armed police who seized all guns in possession of the villagers and arrested a number of suspected persons. In May Khonoma village, the central nerve of the Naga freedom movement was also searched. More people, in the meantime volunteered themselves to go underground from all over the Naga-inhabited hills. In order to control the tide of fast deteriorating situation, police force was quickly strengthened and reinforced and by the end of the year, there were as many as 9 police outposts set up in the Naga Hills.

On the other hand, the Naga leaders were refused interview with the Congress President when the latter came to Manipur and the President, Dr. Rajendra Prasad in New Delhi in December 1953. Their fear and distrust fed by and grown proportionately with this, ultimately hustled the Nagas to quicken the tempo of their revolt

¹ Robert Trumbull, *As I See India*, New York, 1956, pp. 136-150.

and to break off relations with India completely with a view to securing the freedom of their fatherland. Subsequently, there followed the adoption of non-co-operation and civil disobedience particularly parading to this sentence once used by Mahatma Gandhi as a politically peaceful weapon against the British: "Non-co-operation is the only remedy left open to us...It becomes a duty when co-operation means degradation or humiliation or injury to one's cherished religious sentiment." The civil disobedience launched by the Nagas was in practice, non-co-operation with the Indian government servants. School teachers were forced to resign and the students going to their schools stopped; sabotage of communications and burning of schools and government property followed in quick succession and loyal Nagas were assaulted and threatened with serious consequences.

They also refused to provide labour to carry luggage as required under a regulation promulgated by the Assam government in September 1953, and to sell food supplies to officers and police. Red blankets distributed by the Government to the gaonburas or village authorities were returned to the Deputy Commissioner in token of resignation and the national and official celebrations of Indian Union were boycotted as foreign. At the same time, the NNC's propaganda directed by Sakhrie had completely permeated and metamorphosed the minds of the Nagas. They glorified in the visions of independent Nagaland, an elusive pursuit as the following events showed. In the face of the intricate situation, the Assamese government watched helplessly for some time, but later on took tactless and unimaginative measures to restore law and order by opening armed police outposts in the interior, by using intimidation, threats and warnings, by imposing customary collective fines and by tightening the administration further, but these measures only added to exacerbation. The walter of upheavals and assassinations hovered, ebbed and flowed in the air and ground.

However, a Naga Goodwill Mission under the conduct of the Assamese Congress Party, visited Assam between 30 November and 15 December 1953, with the object of creating an atmosphere of peace, salvaging the deteriorating relations and also impressing the Assamese leaders about the true nature of the Nagas' demand for independence. The Mission issued a statement at the conclusion of their visit which runs as follows :

"After 16 days' tour, through the principal towns of Assam, we, the members of the Naga Goodwill Mission to Assam, have returned home richer by the experience and happier for the feeling we have

gained that nothing but goodwill exists between the people of Assam and the people of Nagaland.

"We met the people of Assam in an atmosphere of extreme friendliness. The hospitality extended to us and the cordiality with which we were received were embarrassingly overwhelming. Assam was kind to us. We shall remember it to our dying day.

"It is inconceivable that there could be room for any feeling of hatred in the minds of the authorities towards the Nagas when feelings of such friendliness exist in the mind of the people of Assam in such an abundant measure. The question was frequently asked if we could rightly call our mission a Goodwill Mission in view of the stress and emphasis we place upon the Naga independence issue. We stated on all possible occasions that our Mission was definitely a mission of goodwill inasmuch as the purpose of the mission was to secure understanding, friendship, peace and the goodwill of the people of Assam to remove suspicion, misunderstanding, falsehood and to avoid conflict and bloodshed. Our Mission will have failed to the extent it has failed to bring home to those shooters of epithets that our independence could not be a case of separation when the connection, in the first place, had been non-existent just as much as there could be no separation among the parties of the unmarried couple. Separation could arise only when there had been union, in our case, there was not that 'union' which would give ground for calling our national struggle to regain the former sovereignty a separatist movement much less an 'anti-Indian' movement since the claim of our national independence is not to oppose India.

"The gentlemen of the Press evinced particular interest in the territorial definition of sovereign Nagaland. We are not sure that they have not accepted, though they would not admit, the inevitability of a sovereign Nagaland coming into being. For if our demand did not appear to them to be a demand which had to be recognised sooner or later, the size and other particulars of Nagaland could not possibly strike their thought to be a matter of present interest. In our view this was a matter of detail since Nagaland is a geographical, historical, racial, cultural entity but as they would not accept, ...we had to tell them that Nagaland would comprise all such territories whose residents, by their freely expressed wishes, decided to join Nagaland."

The District Congress of Assam at Gauhati said in a statement that, "The more we have tried to understand the independence demand of the Nagas, the more we have failed to understand it. We can take it only as an expression based on mere sentiment and not

supported by reason."

The Mission, nevertheless met the important members of all the political parties of Assam. And a Congress freedom fighter from Allahabad, Mr. Triloknath Parwar by name, who was immensely interested in the Naga problem, also came up fortuitously at this time. Parwar had made efforts at his own level to impress upon the Nagas to remain in India by securing a guarantee of their safety from the Government of India. Even at the later stage, during Nehru's times, he made unsuccessful attempts to bring round the underground leaders to the negotiation table by pointing out to them that such a demand was absurd and not in consonance with the concept of a modern state.

Though the visit was described as one marked with the utmost friendliness, cordiality and hospitality, the Goodwill Mission produced little goodwill particularly when the Indian armed forces were allegedly arraigned for such acts as raping Naga women, stealing foodstuffs, robbing the forest timbers as well as violating the sanctity of their religion and customs. It also charged the Government that their police forces and soldiers, through encouragement given from the high authorities, were torturing the helpless prisoners, beating and kicking them day and night, denying them sleep and refusing them to have clothes and making them to starve for days together.

On 2 December 1953 Bishnuram Medhi, the Chief Minister of Assam brought forward the based opinion and policy of the Government of India explicitly and said : "I cannot think of any demand for independent sovereign Naga state raised by a few handful of Naga leaders, mostly Christians. And probably this demand was raised by interested foreign missionaries to keep them isolated from the rest of India. During the pre-independence days, the British administrators also were greatly responsible for giving the idea of independence among a handful of Naga leaders under the influence of foreign missionaries."

Again in 1954 Bishnuram Medhi declared in Assam Legislative Assembly that "the people of Naga Hills want jobs, schools, dispensaries, new roads, and as a matter of fact, we have undertaken schemes for affording better educational, medical and other facilities. We want to impress these people by undertaking welfare activities for all-round development of the Naga Hills. Is this not human approach? The Nagas in Burma have accepted the Constitution of Burma government, the Nagas in the Mikir Hills, North Cachar Hills, etc., do not want independence, the Nagas in the NEFA also,

do not want independence. Why this handful of persons want independent Nagaland? The Nagas, as I have stated, are the citizens of the Indian Republic and enjoy equal rights as any citizen. They have much more independence than ourselves in some matters. Shri Gogoi desires to leave the question of separate Naga state to be decided by plebiscite. It will only give a handful of members of the NNC complete independence. I do not think that this is human approach at all. We cannot allow them under the cloak of non-violence to resort to the murders and various crimes. The anti-Indian activities of the NNC must be curbed to some extent. Simultaneously with firm action for preservation of law and order, various welfare works should be speeded up for development of the Naga Hills to demonstrate to the common men in the Naga Hills that it is for their own benefit that they should co-operate with all these welfare activities. Besides we have been associating the people of the Naga Hills in the administration of the state. I may inform that one Naga is serving as Superintendent of Police, another as Additional Deputy Commissioner, etc. They have been entrusted with other important jobs. A large number of them have been awarded scholarships for education in the medical college, engineering school, agriculture college and other educational institutions. I am quite sure that the Nagas will be convinced that in their own interest they remain with Assam and India. It is desirable to allow things to settle down so that the Nagas may realise the futility of pursuing a sentimental agitation for independent Nagaland." On the contrary, his speech and attitude on the Naga issue had aroused deeper passions and fierce indignation of the Nagas against the Assamese.

Mr. Bimalaprosad Chaliha, the Congress President of Assam visited the Naga Hills twice in 1953 in a bid to make a sincere attempt to end the political stalemate when things had already passed from worse to a boiling spiral of danger. He met a number of Naga leaders to work out an agreeable formula by peaceful means and told them that, "since the Constitution is changeable, any defect in it could be removed. Whatever defect there may be in the details, the fundamentals of the Constitution of India are sound and provide full scope for fulfilment of the aspirations of all people. With her independence in a state of infancy, India cannot possibly consider the secession of any territory nor particularly those holding strategic positions. And such action will not only jeopardise the security of the particular territory but India as a whole. If the resolution is unacceptable, you will certainly reject it. But since it has come from your neighbours it will indeed be very good if the NNC gives its

reaction to it so that I may place it again before the Committee for such decisions as it may deem fit. I take the advantage of our friendship to say that I sincerely and honestly desire to do all that is possible for it. I have no other motive. When you don't consider me to be trustworthy, please tell me frankly". But he was later on foiled to go deeper into the issue by the actions of the Medhi's Government and his mission went to the sea of failure.

Just after a Naga delegation's interview with Rajkumari Amrit Kaur, the Health Minister of India at Imphal on 30 November 1953, Mr. Mavalankar, the Speaker of the Lok Sabha, visited the Naga Hills in January 1954 and said that he appreciated the aspirations of the Naga people though he could not support their demand for independence. He further added, "We should meet more of each other, talk more with each other to understand each other more fully, and this would take a long time."

At about this discomfiture, a worse but far-reaching accident took an ugly turn in 1954 in the throes of mysterious circumstances. Captain Virk, a military intelligence officer knocked down a Naga when he was riding his motor cycle through a Kohima street where the Nagas were conducting a peaceful procession. The captain was caught and beaten by the crowd and when the Superintendent of Police, who was also in the procession, ordered a Sub-inspector to rescue the captain, and the crowd attacked him also. While the Sub-inspector was struggling to free himself from the crowd, he shot a bullet which accidentally killed the Vice-President of the Western Group of the Naga National Council and an Assistant Judge in the Angami Tribal Council Court. The legal proceedings for this unfortunate event followed. But this act aroused a revulsion of the utmost abiding resentment and jingoism of the Nagas, increased the depth of their hatred of the "unwanted Indians" and precipitated the revolt.

The situation was fast putrefying in one way or other in tension and suspicion and repeated attempts for peace fell flat. The extremists in the Naga National Council tightened in their unswerving demand for complete independence and continued their sanguinary prowls whereas the puny moderates still adhered to the policy of non-violence. Yet the Central government did not interfere so long as the Nagas talked peacefully of independence without resorting to arms.¹ But law and order broke down in the interior parts on a far larger scale and the Assam government had to assert its authority by force of arms and was obliged to put down with strength the

¹ Prime Minister Nehru's speech at Shillong, December 30, 1957.

disorderly elements while the security forces stepped up their vigilance, apprehending an armed insurrection.

As a result, the extremists once again shattered the moderates within the ranks of the Naga National Council and gave up peaceful demonstrations and petitions. They began preparations for an armed uprising from the Tuensang area, the free Nagaland as called by the Nagas, a part of NEFA on the international frontier with Burma and China where the warlike Naga tribes like Konyaks, Changs, Singtams, Phoms, Singphos, Khaptis, etc., were living unadministered for centuries right till the end of the British rule in India. Here, it was only after independence that India sent its mission of armed forces in 1948 in the wake of the disturbances caused by the head-hunting Nagas, to extend administration in these primitive tribal areas which the British did not intrude and take over. Thereafter the new policy of the Government of India was, as Nehru declared, "to bring these frontier areas under more direct administrative control to enable them to share the benefits of a welfare state, subject to the protection of their distinct social and cultural pattern." But the tribesmen reacted to the administrative mission of goodwill and civilisation as an act of intrusion into their territory and its violation. They appealed to the United Nations by stating that they were in free Nagaland and that India was invading their sacrosanct territory.

The Assam Rifles attacked the Chingmai village in June 1954 despite resistance by the villagers, and seized some incriminating documents. On 18 September 1954 the first so-called Hongking or Federal Government of Nagaland¹ was announced in the Tuensang area as the first step of projected seizure of power and more disturbances followed. The old tribal feud was also reportedly dragged on to stir up the situation. In October 1954 a son of the Pangsha warrior was ambushed and killed, and the cause of accident was not known by the Pangsha village. In due time, news reached Pangshas that Yangpang village celebrated the success of head-hunting over the head of their chief's son. The infuriated Pangshas raided immediately the Yangpang village and killed fifty-seven villagers. But, it was said that the Yangpang massacre was in fact the score of the old village quarrel in the early 1936. In the beginning, Yangpang village had a quarrel with the strong Kojok village. Yangpangs hired the powerful Pangsha villagers with promise of mithuns to attack the

¹ Hongking means "get out" in Chang tribal language. The Hongking government implied to force the Government of India out from the land of the Nagas. Incidentally, Hongking was an elderly man living in a village somewhere in the Patkai Range and was made the first Federal President of Nagaland.

Kojoks. Accordingly Pangshas raided the Kojok village for which Pangsha village was burnt down by the Government as a punitive measure. But Yangpangs were unpunished and mithuns were also not paid. Pangshas were waiting for an opportunity and they took the help of the Government and attacked the Yangpang village. Thus confusedly, the unrest sparked out. The Government of Assam blamed that the elements of Naga National Council had brought about the revival of the brutal display of head-hunting. The Naga National Council denied the allegation and said that Tuensang was 'Free' Nagaland under the so-called Hongking government and had no connection with this outrage, which had set off a chain of events.

Hereupon, lawlessness and violence were rampant in all parts of the Naga Hills and Tuensang area of NEFA since the very foundation of peace and order was shaken and loosened. The Assam government too went into full action in dealing with the situation without an intimate knowledge of the difficulties and missed to hit the crux of the problem. Situation seemed to be fluid out of control down to the ground. But soon stringent measures were adopted against the Nagas and law and order was restored quite precariously. The Central government seemed to have unheeded the Nagas who were voicing their hatred of the Assam government for their highhandedness in dealing with the Nagas. The tribal councils were abolished; the Kohima High School was closed down when a majority of its students were prevented by the NNC from participation in the Independence Day Celebrations. Orders under Section 144 of the Criminal Procedure Code banning the assembly of more than five persons as well as processions within a radius of five miles of Kohima town were issued. At Lungkham village of Mokokchung sub-division was posted an additional police force to keep its inhabitants in check. The Governor of Assam promulgated a regulation, providing for the requisition of porters in case of emergency for the transport of government stores and luggage of officials. All these measures confirmed the Naga fears of impending Assamese domination over them and increased their apathy towards them. The Naga extremists tightened their belts, first and last, to rise openly in arms against the Government throughout Nagaland and were prepared to risk the danger of all-out conflict by open fighting.

The gravity of hostilities multiplied in number and magnitude in Nagaland. In March 1955 fierce fighting took place in the Tuensang division when the rebel Nagas under the Hongking government attacked the Assam Rifles and a loyal Lengnya village

with modern lethal weapons. About sixty houses and some granaries were burnt down. The Assam Rifles retaliated by ransacking villages in the Aghuneto area. Thus the things were getting worse each day necessitating army deployment. About two divisions of the army and thirty-five battalions of the Assam Rifles or Armed Police were soon brought in operation in the Naga Hills, Tuensang Frontier division and the adjoining Naga areas to restore law and order. They carried out operations against the strongholds of rebels in Tuensang area, which was declared a "disturbed area" on 20 July 1955. At this time, almost all important leaders were overground. They denied the Naga National Council's hand in the disturbances and urged the Government to preserve peace, pending discussion over the issue of Naga independence. A Naga delegation consisting of Phizo, Jasokie and three other leaders met the Assam Chief Minister, Medhi at Shillong on 15 August 1955, and signed a declaration condemning terrorism and promising the use of peaceful methods by the NNC. The statement signed by the Naga delegation on 13 August 1955 reads: "The declared policy of the Naga National Council is of non-violence and we, the undersigned, reiterate the same and condemn any violence that has been committed in different parts of the Naga Hills district by some miscreants. We assure the Government of Assam and India and remind the Nagas that whoever indulges in any act of violence will go against the best interests of the Naga people and we appeal to the people in general for preservation of law and order and to help the administration in restoring peace and order." This gave an impressive semblance of faddy peace and had no doubt some desired effect as the situation showed signs of improvement. Incidents of violence became comparatively fewer. But it was fragile and temporary, as it was soon beset with uncertainties.

Meanwhile, the Naga National Council itself was passing through a period of internal dissensions, crises and intrigues. Sakhrie, Jasokie and others who were disillusioned with Phizo's leadership held a series of secret meetings from September 1955 onwards to reorganise the NNC and work for a peaceful solution of the Naga problem. On the other hand, in his report, placed before the House of the People on 30 September 1955, the Prime Minister, Pandit Nehru pointed out that the tribes differed greatly from each other, some being "rather primitive" and others "remarkably developed and advanced." He also emphasised that under British rule the tribal areas had been "almost completely cut off from the rest of India". Criticising the "legalistic and bureaucratic approach" of certain

officials, which had led to "a certain lack of confidence among the tribal folk," Pt. Nehru pointed out that "the situation in the Naga Hills would have been much better if it had been handled a little more competently by local officers, and if some officers who were notoriously unpopular had not been kept there." While describing the demand for an independent Naga state as absurd, Pt. Nehru said that if the right type of officers were appointed the Nagas would respond fairly easily to a friendly approach. He further added that the Nagas were "proud and sensitive, and do not like being treated as subject people or being looked down upon in any way." But Pt. Nehru's realisation came too late, say, after the matters had reached the pitch where in other times there had been a resort to fighting and violence. However, the whole trouble of the situation began due to the under-estimation of Zaphu Phizo's influence upon the Nagas, the twist between the Nagas and the Central government by the Medhi Government of Assam. Not only these the Assam government were more concerned with law and order than the well-being of the people of the Naga Hills and consequently they failed even to scratch the surface of the problem and find a solution.

The Nagas sent their representatives to meet the Assam Chief Minister in October 1955, issued leaflets for peace and had a number of public meetings at the end of the year. Thus, the moderates who had lost the organisation in Phizo's sudden rise to top, were coming up again and tightening their hold over the NNC. The cluster of such circumstances led Phizo to drag in underground in order to destroy the liberals and make efforts to achieve freedom for Nagaland by organising a strong disciplined armed force (Home guard) and establishing a parallel Federal government, whose sovereignty would extend to all Naga areas in Assam, Manipur and Burma. Sakhrie, Phizo's own cousin and an expert propagandist writer, who opposed violent doctrine, was kidnapped from his house, tied to a tree and murdered brutally with a view to striking terror to the 'traitors' by the extremists in January 1956. Herewith the moderates and the extremists parted company almost for good. Now fierce fighting broke out here, there and everywhere in the Naga Hills which has been declared "disturbed area" on 31 January 1956. The Naga Hills Disturbed Area Ordinance and Assam Maintenance of Public Order promulgated by the Government came in force. As the Indian armed forces replaced the Assam police battalions, the Special Powers Act was also enforced in the Naga Hills in order to take necessary measures to maintain law and order and to stop violence and bloodshed.

Hereupon, on 22 March 1956 the Nagas proclaimed its Federal government as a *de facto* government at Phensinyu village in the Rengma area according to their constitution adopted and signed by the Head of the State, President and the Commander-in-Chief of the Naga army. Khriesanisa was appointed the President of their Nagaland government. Kilonsers (Ministers), Tatars (Members of Parliament), Ahngs (Governors), etc. were also appointed. The Naga Youth Movement and the Naga Women's Society were reactivated with the express object of mobilising young men and women. The NYM was entrusted to act as couriers and to raise subscriptions, construct camps and collect important information about the movement and development of the Indian security forces whereas the NWS to work as cooks, nurses, tailors, and caretakers of the underground. The Naga National flag, bearing the red, green and white with three blue stars was hoisted with great traditional ceremony and feast.

The Federal Constitution runs briefly as follows: "Nagaland is a people's sovereign republic. This has been so from time immemorial. There shall be a Parliament with a strength of 100 Tatars (Members). The President will be elected by the people and his Cabinet will consist of fifteen Kilonsers (Ministers).

"Nagaland will maintain permanent military neutrality. There will be no standing army for the maintenance of law and order. There will be a Department of Homeguards headed by a Chief to function in the dual capacity of police and soldiers.

"In Nagaland, land belongs to the people and it will remain so. There will be no land tax, and other forms of taxation (which the Nagas have not paid before) will be formulated by different administrative units.

"All forms of trade, business, industry, transport and other public utility will be free and will be in the hands of private enterprise. Education will be in the hands of the people. Religion will be free.

"Each Naga village is a republic in its own right. Each Naga family or tribe occupies its own distinct region, and shall continue as before to exercise full authority over its own affairs including land, community organisations, social and religious practices and customs.

"Men and women, above 22 years of age, will have equal rights of voting. There will be equal wages for equal work, irrespective of sex."

The whole Nagaland (Federal government) was divided into three states, later four, each headed by a Governor (Ahng) and the

other functionaries in the villages also. Besides there were ambassadors, advisers, deputy commissioners and magistrates. The Federal Supreme Court would decide all the important constitutional, civil and criminal cases referred to it by the subordinate courts.

Simultaneously the Naga army was set up with a Commander-in-Chief (General), a Major General for each tribe commanding a division of 500 men, Brigadiers and other officer ranks to an ordinary soldier. The Indian army regular uniforms with insignia on the British system and rewards such as Victoria Cross, a Military Cross and a military medal were provided with. The emoluments were fixed at Rs. 50/- per mensem, which eventually came down to subsistence level. The Naga soldiers armed themselves with enormous dumps of arms and ammunition left behind by the Japanese and British forces during the Second World War in the Naga Hills, Manipur and Burma. Some were purchased, other were captured from the Indian security forces in raids on their stations and outposts. They also used the indigenous guns made by Konyaks. Afterwards, they procured arms and ammunition from Pakistan and also from China. The clothes and medicines were supplied with high prices by the Indian merchants in the plains as well as the loyal Nagas. They also prepared indigenous medicines from trees, insects, animals and herbs. Women were volunteered from each village for the NWS. During the crucial phase of operations, the NWS became ineffective, but still continued. The trained nurses, compounders, ex-army men were also recruited.

The Naga Federal government had to fight on two fronts, the Indian government and its troops as well as the loyal anti-rebel Nagas; the rebels ambushed Indian army convoys and patrols on the roads and attacked outposts. They disrupted the communications by damaging roads, bridges and telegraph lines. The loyal Nagas and whosoever else opposed their cause were kidnapped and murdered brutally. Money and food supplies were forcibly exacted from the villages as the taxes payable to the Federal government. Moreover, they mounted ambushes on nearby villages to get villagers involved in the counter-fire and operations by the Indian armed forces. Such acts of lawlessness spread not only in the Naga Hills, Manipur, Naga areas of Burma but even in Mikir hills, Khasi-Jaintia hills and Kachar hills of Assam also, to a very lesser extent. Some leaders within the rank and file of the NNC who chose to raise their voice against such course appealed for peace. Vilhoulme, a leader of the Naga home guard surrendered on 27 May 1956 and called upon the Nagas to reorganise the NNC on non-violence lines. But the fighting had intensified with increasing

casualties on all sides.

On the other hand, the Government no longer took flippantly the size of the Naga Federal army and proscribed the Naga Federal government as illegal and its office bearers as traitors and issued a warrant for Phizo's arrest on charges of murder, rioting, trespass, treason, abduction and his complexity in Sakhrie's murder. A cash reward of Rs. 10,000 to any person assisting the security forces or providing useful information about his arrest was also announced. Military operations were intensified to quell the revolt under the Defence of India Act supervised by Major-General Kochhar during April and May 1956. Some of the rebel strongholds were destroyed and atrocities were committed by mistake including the killing of a Naga veteran physician, Dr. Haralu for which Prime Minister, Nehru bemoaned heartily.¹ On 30 May 1956 Pt. Nehru stated that the general strategy for the present was to post the armed forces in the centres where they would be easily available to assist the population against intimidation, to organise loyal villagers for self-defence and to enlist active co-operation of the Nagas. Pt. G.B. Pant, Home Minister, visited Assam from 29 June to 1 July 1956 and discussed the Naga situation with Chief Minister Medhi and high-ranking civil and military officials. Afterwards the Government took measures to preserve law and order and to protect the innocent civilian population. A body of village-guards was formed on village-to-village basis; they were supplied by the Government with muskets, rifles, uniforms and training; the villages were regrouped and stockaded to hostiles' coming into contact and ration, almost on the same tactics as of the British army's campaigns against Malayasian communist guerillas after the Second World War. But the hostiles emerged as loyal local men by concealing their arms. Pt. G.B. Pant declared in the Lok Sabha on 31 July 1956 that 371 rebels were killed while the army and police lost 68 killed and 234 wounded.

During the initial course of operations the armed forces met a number of teething troubles and death due to difficulties of climate and terrain, lack of transport and serious language barriers. At the same time they carried out the orders of the Prime Minister Nehru and the Chief of Army Staff's instructions to deal the Nagas with moderate force as fellow-Indians. The Chief of the Army Staff issued an order to the armed forces: "You must remember that all the people of the area in which you are operating are fellow-Indians. They may have a different religion, may pursue a different way of life, but they are Indians and the very fact that they are different

¹ Speech in the Lok Sabha on August 23, 1956.

and yet part of India is a reflection of India's greatness. Some of these people are misguided and have taken to arms against their own people, and are disrupting the peace of this area. You are to protect the mass of the people from these disruptive elements. You are not there to fight the people in the area, but to protect them. You are fighting only those who threaten the people and who are danger to the lives and properties of the people. You must therefore do everything possible to win their confidence and respect and to help them feel that they belong to India."

But the Nagas passed through an excruciating period in which indiscriminate arrests, beatings, kidnappings, murders, burning of villages, destruction of granaries, orchards and lifting of livestock continued to their utter mental and physical torment. During a parliamentary debate on the Naga question on 23 August 1956, Mr. Reishang Kaishing, a Naga socialist Member of Parliament from Ukhrul in Manipur, a fine quick-witted grandiloquent speaker influenced by tinge of Dr. Ram Manohar Lohia's socialism accused the Indian army of indulging in an orgy of rape, pillage and murder. He added that 2,000 people whose villages were burnt down had been starving in the jungles and that over 500 were in the prison. In reply to his charge, Prime Minister Nehru stated that most of the villages destroyed and burnt were by the rebels or had accidentally caught fire during military operations, and that the only villages burnt by the Army had been those occupied by the rebels. "The Army," he declared, "had shown remarkable patience in the face of considerable provocation," and all incidents had been investigated and the guilty punished. He also said that he himself had met Phizo and other Naga leaders half-a-dozen times in the past, and each time Phizo had subsequently represented the meeting as a concession to his claim for independence. In consequence, the Prime Minister insisted that violence and the demand for independence should be abandoned before there could be any further meetings. An amnesty had already been proclaimed, the only persons excluded from it being those who had committed murder. He described the suggestion of a parliamentary delegation to visit the Naga areas as impracticable since "a battalion would have to be sent to protect it."

Getting aside the weakness of an army by training and profession in defence of the country, the Indian army accompanied some mission of civilization to Nagaland. It opened the communications to the general welfare by blasting rocks, by construction of bridges, building roads and clearing landslides, where contractors or

labourers refused to risk their lives. The army officers taught the Naga villagers hygiene, sanitation and general cleanliness. They taught Hindi, games and P.T. to school boys and girls, shared their food, encouraged development schemes and joined in their dances, song and music with appreciation. The army doctors treated the Naga patients with sympathy and friendliness. The army medical units were made available to the needy villages. For all these, Prime Minister Nehru said in the Lok Sabha in August 1960, "I think I can say with a measure of confidence that, on the whole, our Indian army functioned with discipline and credit to themselves and in accordance with their own high traditions."

Thereafter, the open fighting broke out near Kohima between the rival factions of the Naga National Council i.e., one who favoured Phizoism and those who opposed it, taking in its flood destruction and suffering of the people. Meanwhile, on 15 September 1956 six Naga leaders visited New Delhi and had discussions with Pandit Nehru with regard to the military operations and the future of the Naga people. They also proposed the unification of all Naga areas in the Tuensang Division, Assam, Manipur and Burma. The Prime Minister told them that the display of violence had brought great sufferings to the Nagas themselves and that the Government was determined to put down the secessionist elements with the co-operation of the loyal Nagas. He further assured them that as soon as peace and order returned, the Government would consider any change for the Nagas except sovereignty subject to the unity, integrity and security of the Indian Union. Fighting which began earlier was going down, stretching the trail of acrimony; the liberal and church leaders came out openly against the violence and were critical of the Naga view of a separate sovereign state. Some of these people began to take part in the elections and others worked to bring a political solution of the deadlocked problem between the Naga National Council and Indian government.

The Government of Assam also distributed pamphlets over the Naga areas indicating the settlement of the problem: "Referring to the agreement made by the Naga National Council in 1947 with Sir Akbar Hydari, the then Governor of Assam, the Prime Minister Pt. Nehru stated that it was not correct that the agreement had been dishonoured by the Government. The Sixth Schedule of the Indian Constitution was largely drawn up keeping that agreement in view. The object of that Schedule is to give autonomy to those areas and to let the Nagas live according to their own ways. If the Sixth Schedule does not go far enough, or is not wholly satisfactory, it can be

reconsidered and Parliament can amend it.”¹ But it was too late to have any fruitful effect. In December 1956, Phizo had already slipped out to East Pakistan to seek foreign help for the Naga independence.

Now, looking at the unfortunate trends of events after the independence of India, we see that the whole trouble started from the point that the Central government obviously facing gigantic problems attending partition and creation of a viable quasi-federal Indian Union and paying little attention to the distant border areas in the north-east of India² entrusted the Assam government so much so for the responsibility of administering the hill tribes of Assam without keeping much in mind their poignant historical relations. The carrot and the stick policy of the Assam government towards the hill people particularly the Nagas met with irritation and decisive revolt. When the Prime Minister Pt. Nehru came to realise at late hour about the futility of this policy, he withdrew, gave up banking on Assam but the situation in Naga Hills had become too uncontrollable and had sparked off the revolt for independence. Had the Central government dealt firmly with the Nagas a little earlier in a more liberal way than the Assam government, the problem would not have become precarious and a way of gradual integration with the Indian Union in accordance with their will and at their own pace could have become easier.

¹ Extract from *Government of Assam Pamphlet* No. 4/56 scattered by air over Nagaland on October 28, 1956.

² See *Amrita Bazar Patrika*. October 12, 1953, p.4.

The State of Nagaland

Man makes state to create life good and blissful.
When it is not fulfilled,
to have any criterion of its existence ceases.

—Naga Maxim

KOHIMA CONVENTION

Piqued with two fateful years of fierce little war¹ between the rebel Nagas and the Indian government troops that ravaged Nagaland on unprecedented scale had brought in its wake, the increasing loss of lives, untold suffering and misery to the common people, appalling devastation of property and villages, uprooting society and increasing threat to the peace and order. During the years no help in any form came from foreign countries for the cause of Naga independence as Naga problem was considered to be an internal affair of India. The moderate Nagas motivated by an earnest desire to avoid bloodshed, to restore peace, to heal past wounds of suspicion and anxiety and to serve the people in good faith, swore off independence, mustered their courage despite the threat to their lives by Phizoites, called upon all traditional Naga leaders to get together at a convention to discuss the Naga issue, to open a dialogue with the Government of India in appropriate time and to devise ways in order to arrive at such a political settlement in keeping with the honour and tradition of the Nagas in contrast to the demand of the extremists led by Phizo. In addition, fearing that if the problem not rapidly contained and pacified but continued in abeyance without a settlement, it might have borne a threat to the peace of the state and sensitive borders, the Assam government in consultation with the Central government immediately sponsored the moderates for such a political congress. First of all, these loyal people formed a Reforming Committee of the Naga National Council. This Committee issued a statement signed by its chairman, Mr. Thepfülo Nakhro (T.N. Angami) at Kohima on 18 February 1957, which listed its aim as to oppose to the violent, military methods, to help restore peace, order and security, to win over hostiles and to stand by the Prime Minister's assurance for peace and administrative changes. Further the Committee reiterated to

¹ Gavin Young, *The Nagas: An Unknown War*, London, 1962.

share the right of India's independence and set up a separate administrative unit for the Nagas in keeping with their tradition and custom intact within the Constitution of India, centrifugal from the independence and to send its representatives to the Indian Parliament. The Reforming Committee elected Messers Khelhoshe, Chubatemsu and Subedar Satsuo to fill the three Assam legislative assembly seats for the Naga Hills uncontested in the second General Elections of India. Khelhoshe was the Deputy Minister in the Assam ministry. But all of them left the Assembly by the creation of the Naga Hills as a separate unit from Assam.

Accordingly, the Naga People's Convention represented by about 1,765 traditional representatives of the different Naga tribes particularly from the Naga Hills and Tuensang area of NEFA and about 2,000 observers from the other Naga areas, was called at Kohima from 22 to 26 August 1957 under the chairmanship of Dr. Imkongliba. The Convention unanimously voiced the view that, "being deeply grieved by the killings and the widespread sufferings caused by burning of houses and granaries the destruction of crops, grouping of villages, restriction of freedom of movement and speech, forced labour without payment, the resultant diseases and hunger, we, a convention of the Naga people, drawn from every tribe and area of the territories now known as the Naga Hills district of Assam and the Tuensang Frontier division of NEFA, having met in Kohima on the 22 August 1957 in search of a solution to end the infinite sufferings and bloodshed, do hereby resolve as follows:

"We maintain that the only answer to the Naga question is a satisfactory political settlement. In as much as a large number of our people are still underground and there is no freedom of movement and speech under the present conditions in the Naga Hills district, we feel no full discussions can be held among the people preliminary to negotiations.

"In order to create the conditions necessary for a political settlement, the following immediate change as an interim measure is essential. The present Naga Hills district of Assam and Tuensang Frontier division of NEFA along with the reserved forests, transferred out of the Naga Hills district after the reforms of 1921, should be constituted into a single administrative unit, under the External Affairs Ministry of the Government of India through the Governor of Assam acting in his discretion as the Agent of the President of India, so as to ensure with our active help, a genuine, general amnesty, speedy end of hostilities and relief to suffering. In connection with resolution No. 3, the following supplementary resolution is passed:

If the Government express inability to take up the question of re-transfer of the forest immediately, the delegates are empowered to agree to the immediate constitution of a separate administrative unit under the Central government comprising of the Naga Hills district and the Tuensang Frontier division of NEFA without prejudice to our claim for the forest which will be again agitated at the time of entering into negotiations for a political settlement. This supplementary resolution has been passed in view of the extreme urgency of a change in the administrative set up.

"We strongly urge the Government to implement the above proposal immediately as we, on our part pledge ourselves, to actively work together to end hostilities that the army and police can be withdrawn and the villages de-grouped, and to try by all means in our power to heal old feuds so that all of us, both those now underground and those overground may work together for the good of our land and the free development of our people according to our own traditions.

"Appealing to the countrymen in arms to give up the cult of violence, the Convention asks for the prayers of all men of goodwill, both underground and overground and in Government services for the achievement of a lasting and honourable peace."

Further, in essence the Convention promptly demanded the integration of the Naga Hills of Assam and Tuensang Division of NEFA as a single administrative unit under the Indian External Affairs Ministry, which would to be administered by the Assam Governor as the Agent of the President of India. This proposal was to be an interim arrangement pending a permanent political settlement within the Indian Union. However, at the deliberations of the Convention, the pro-hostiles and moderates quarreled over the phrase "within the Indian Union" which the latter wanted to incorporate so as to make the position of the Convention clear in giving up the demand for independence. At last, the deadlock and wrangling was resolved in a compromising resolution, passed on August 26, when the Governor of Assam sent a message on 25 August which said: "if delegates really desire satisfactory political settlement and ending of Naga trouble, as I am sure they do, the resolution must clearly state that political settlement will be within the Union of India. Any settlement to be practical and acceptable must be within the Indian Union. It will also be, as far as I can see, in the best interests of the Naga people in whom we are all interested. I have great hope in the collective wisdom and practical sense of the assembled delegates." -

The Convention also elected nine person-delegation headed by its President, Dr. Imkongliba to carry on political negotiations with the Central government of India.

In defiance of the appeal of the Convention and the Government to the rebel Nagas, the hard core of the underground leadership had not given up its stance completely, though it was fairly clear to them that they could not go on pitched battle against the Indian government troops for long. Rather they chose to continue fighting and adopted guerilla tactics, "hit and run" prowling in small groups with a fairly large number of followers and stocks of arms and ammunition to ambush patrols, shoot soldiers and punish their brethren who were loyal to the Indian government just like the Irish Sinn Fein forces practised in 1919 and 1920 for the Irish Home Rule. The Assam Governor, Fazl Ali, stated in the Legislative Assembly that "over 240 people, the vast majority of whom were loyal Naga villagers, were estimated to have been killed by the rebels."¹ At the same time, the rebels desperately looked out for political, military and economic support from the foreign countries particularly from those unfriendly to India to achieve their avowed objective of the independence of Nagaland.

NAGA HILLS-TUENSANG AREA UNIT

The nine man delegation met the Prime Minister, Jawaharlal Nehru in New Delhi on the basis of the Convention's resolution, as recommended by the Assam Governor, Fazl Ali. They discussed the Naga situation with him between 23 and 25 September 1957 and assured him that they would put their best efforts for restoration of peace in the troubled Nagaland and help to usher in an atmosphere conducive to the dispassionate discussion of all the aspects of the Naga problem for a final settlement that would be in the best interest of the Naga people. While the Prime Minister Nehru objected to the concept and practicability of an overall sovereign independent Nagaland, he promptly consented to the immediate demand for a separate Naga administration out of Assam, under the Central government and announced that the Centre would grant amnesty to the rebels, "in respect of all offences committed against the State in the past," though the amnesty would not cover future offences. He also gave an assurance that the necessary amendments to the Constitution would be considered by Parliament at its next session in November-December 1957. The Assam government's announcement for amnesty on 26 October 1957 was also still in force and

¹ Speech in the Legislative Assembly of Assam on June 8, 1957.

under it 161 prisoners and some other 76 convicted persons were released. Further, the amnesty was extended to pardon even those Nagas who had committed murder or other heinous crimes against other Nagas, provided that they secured pardon from the aggrieved persons or the surviving members of their families, in accordance with the tribal customs.

The Bill for amendment of the Sixth Schedule of the Constitution was introduced by the Home Minister, Pt. G.B. Pant in the Lok Sabha on 20 November 1957 and passed on 25, and was subsequently passed by the Rajya Sabha on 28. It received the assent of the President, Dr. Rajendra Prasad on November 29. Thus the Naga Hills-Tuensang Area Act, 1957 was passed by the Parliament of India. Speaking on the Bill, Pt. Pant said that for a territory of 350,000 people, with an annual revenue of less than £40,000 to aspire to full independence was not feasible in the modern world. Although the Central government had taken all steps to fulfil the assurances given by Pt. Nehru to the Naga delegation in September, Pt. Pant admitted that there had been "no very marked response." However, he expressed the hope that the Government's decision would encourage the forces of peace and help others also to realize where Naga interests lay.

According to this Act, from 1 December 1957, the Naga Hills district of Assam and the Tuensang Frontier division of NEFA covering an area of 6,236 sq. miles with a population of about 3,69,00 living in 718 villages were constituted into a single administrative unit.

It was divided into three districts with headquarters at Kohima, Mokokchung and Tuensang and would be administered by a Commissioner and the three Deputy Commissioners on behalf of the Governor of Assam acting as the Agent of the President of India. Paragraph 20 of the Sixth Schedule to the Constitution was amended and certain consequential amendments of the delimitation of Parliamentary and Assembly Constituencies Order, 1956, and the representation of the People Act, 1950 were carried out. Provision was made in Clause 5 of the Act for an additional nominated member in the Lok Sabha to represent the new Unit. The Central government would bear the entire cost of the administration of the Union territory of this, the Tuensang Area, already being Centrally administered as part of the NEFA, would not impose any new financial burden on the Central government. The Naga Hills Autonomous district of Assam and the expenditure incurred in respect of this district by the Government of Assam would now pass on to the

Central government.

The Act came into force with effect from 1 December 1957 when the Governor of Assam, Fazl Ali on behalf of President of India inaugurated the new centrally administered Naga unit and took over the administration as an "interim measure" in response to the wishes of the Naga people. The Naga Unit was placed under the Ministry of External Affairs. Colonel P.N. Luther was appointed the first Commissioner of the Unit. Nevertheless, the complete text of the Naga Hills-Tuensang Area (Administration) Regulation, 1957 as promulgated by the President of India, runs as follows:

"In exercise of the powers conferred by Article 240 of the Constitution read with sub-paragraph (2) of paragraph 18 of the Sixth Schedule to the Constitution the President is pleased to promulgate the following Regulation made by him :—

"1. (i) This Regulation may be called the Naga Hills-Tuensang Area (Administration) Regulation, 1957; (ii) It extends to the whole of the Naga Hills-Tuensang Area ; (iii) It shall come into force on such date : the Central government, may, by notification in the Official Gazette, appoint.

"2. In this Regulation, (a) "appointed day" means the date appointed under sub-section (3) of section 1 for the coming into force of this Regulation; (b) "Law" means any law, ordinance, regulation, order, bye-law, rule, scheme notification or other instruments having the force of law in India or any part thereof.

"3. The Naga Hills-Tuensang Area shall be divided into three districts to be called Kohima district, Mokokchung district and Tuensang district, each comprising the areas respectively set out against it in the Schedule.

"4. (i) The administration of Naga Hills-Tuensang Area shall be carried on by the Governor of Assam as the Agent of the President; (ii) The Central government may appoint a commissioner for the Naga Hills-Tuensang Area to assist the Governor of Assam; and and the Governor may appoint a Deputy Commissioner for each of the districts therein and the Deputy Commissioners shall perform their functions under the supervision and control of the Commissioner.

"5. Without prejudice to the provisions of section 4 and to the powers of the Central government to appoint from time to time such officer as may be necessary for the administration of the Naga Hills-Tuensang Area, all other officers who, immediately before the appointed day, were exercising lawful functions in the Naga Hills-Tuensang Area or any part thereof shall, until other provision is

made by the Central government in this behalf, continue to exercise in connection with the administration of the Naga Hills-Tuensang Area, their respective powers and jurisdiction and to perform their respective duties and functions in the same manner and to the same extent as before the appointed day.

“6. Save as otherwise expressly provided in this Regulation, all laws in force in the Naga Hills district or the Tuensang Frontier division of the North East Frontier Agency immediately before the appointed day shall continue in force in the districts of Kohima and Mokokchung or, as the case may be, in the Tuensang district until repealed or amended by a competent legislature or other competent authority.

“7. All taxes, duties, cesses or fees which, immediately before the appointed day, were lawfully levied in the Naga Hills-Tuensang Area or any part thereof shall continue to be levied and to be applied to the same purposes, until other provision is made by a competent legislature or other competent authority.

“8. For the avoidance of doubts, it is hereby declared that all property and assets within the districts of Kohima and Mokokchung which, immediately before the appointed day, vested in the state Government of Assam shall, as from that day, vest in the Central government.

“9. All rights, liabilities and obligations of the state Government of Assam in relation to the districts of Kohima and Mokokchung shall, as from the appointed day, be the rights, liabilities and obligations of the Central government.

“10. (i) Any territorial references in any law to the Naga Hills district, the Naga Tribal Area, or the Tuensang Frontier Division shall be construed as references— (a) in the case of the Naga Hills district, to the districts of Kohima and Mokokchung; and (b) in the case of the Naga Tribal Area or the Tuensang district. (ii) In the rules for the administration of justice and police in the Naga Hills district prescribed by the Governor of Assam in his No. 2530 (b) A.P. dated the 25 March 1937, as in force in the districts of Kohima and Mokokchung, and reference to the Inspector General of Police, Assam, shall be construed as a reference to the Superintendent of Police, Naga Hills-Tuensang Area. (iii) In the Assam Frontier (Administration of Justice) Regulation, 1945, as in force in the Tuensang district, any reference to Political Officer, Additional Political Officer and Assistant Political Officer shall be construed as a reference to Additional Deputy Commissioner and Assistant Commissioner, Deputy Commissioner, respectively.

"11. For the purpose of facilitating the application of any law in the Naga Hills-Tuensang Area, any court of other authority may construe any such law with alterations, not affecting the substance, as may be necessary or proper to adapt it to the matter before the court of other authority.

"12. (1) If any difficulty arises in giving effect to the provisions of this Regulation or in connection with the administration of the Naga Hills-Tuensang Area, the Central government, may, by order, make such further provision as appears to it to be necessary or expedient for removing the difficulty. (2) Any order under subsection (1) may be made so as to be retrospective to any date not earlier than the appointed day.

"13. The Central government may, by notification in the Official Gazette, make rules to carry out the purposes of this Regulation."

Thus, the Assam government, which was in virtual control of the Naga Hills as a district since independence and which had proved itself very inefficient and weak for the task, had to beat a sorry retreat from the Naga Hills. Subsequently the Nagas ceased to have their burning sense of apathy against the Assam government and not the people.

At the same time about 3,000 rebels came out overground voluntarily, while about 4,000 in number were arrested, though most of whom were granted amnesty shortly after. In spite of the special administrative arrangement made by the Indian government the underground Nagas still continued to harp on their demand for a sovereign independent Nagaland and with it they had coalesced the determination to die to the last man, and described the new Unit as a bribe to the moderates. They raided the loyal villages, ambushed military convoys and patrols, attacked army and civil posts, besieged them and blew up bridges in Nagaland.

UNGMA CONVENTION

From 21 to 23 May 1958, the second Naga People's Convention was held at Ungma, the largest Ao Naga village in Mokokchung district, notwithstanding the protests and threats of the underground Nagas that they should not pose any obstruction on the way of independence of Nagaland. The Convention attended by 2,705 delegates, representing various Naga tribes, had passed the following resolution:

"1. This Convention reaffirms the decision of the Naga People's Convention held at Kohima and expresses satisfaction that since the creation of the new administrative Unit under the External Affairs

Ministry, there has been cessation of armed conflict despite sporadic instances of raids by some irresponsible parties. 2. The Convention strongly condemns all sorts of violence, dacoity, theft, intimidation, false impersonation, false propaganda, imposition of fines and closing down of schools in certain areas. 3. The Convention requests the Government to extend the period of amnesty and appeals to all those who are still underground to come overground, availing themselves of the amnesty."

The Convention also appointed a Liaison Committee consisting of eight members namely Imkongliba, Kevichusa, Vizol, Tekasosang, Khelhoshe, Sangba, Etssorhomo and Lakimong to contact the insurgent underground leaders in order to mollify their feelings against the extreme stand and to explore the possibility of finding a peaceful solution of the conflicting issue, the outcome of which was to be placed before the Select Committee within three months for its consideration. So the Committee got in touch with the underground leaders but to its dismay found that they had not changed their stand and were still for a sovereign Nagaland, having nothing to do with India. Rather the Committee were asked to inform the Government of India to confirm recognition of the Naga Federal government first as the basis of negotiations for a political settlement. Such was the attitude of the rebels. The Naga People's Convention now found no way of accommodating the underground demand except to strive to its own way for a political settlement within the Indian Union.

The Select Committee of the Convention met on 11 and 12 December 1958 to work out prospects of plan and preferences for the future of Nagaland. A Drafting Committee was appointed to prepare a settlement of the issue, according to the resolution passed by the Convention. The Committee thrashed out 16 points of their demand culminating into the decision to establish a Nagaland state within the Indian Union. The underground Nagas raised strong objections to this, shaking their fists at Convention-men for putting up such a foolish step at the peril of their future. Yet, unheeding their intimidations, the Convention stood by the Nagaland state, whatever cost there might incur, in the short and long term interests of the Naga people.

MOKOKCHUNG CONVENTION

The third Naga People's Convention met at Mokokchung from 22-26 October 1959 to discuss the draft constitution, prepared by the Drafting Committee, being set up by a Select Committee of the first Convention held at Kohima in 1957, in a way to settle the Naga

problem amicably within the framework of the Constitution of India. The Convention at this time attended by 3,000 Naga delegates and others repudiated the long sustained, yet absurd, demand for a sovereign Nagaland state and had unanimously endorsed the draft constitution¹ for the establishment of a Nagaland state within India. The draft constitution containing 16 points for the settlement of the Naga political standstill with the Government of India was mainly the constitution of a separate state in India, to be known as Nagaland under the Ministry of External Affairs, with a Governor and administrative secretariat, a council of ministers and legislative assembly, etc. Because of its importance in the state constitutionalism, the full text of the Convention is reproduced here:

"1. *The Names:* The territories that were hitherto known as the Naga Hills-Tuensang Area under the Naga Hills-Tuensang Area Act 1957, and any other Naga areas, which may hereafter come under it shall form a state within the Indian Union and be hereafter known as the Nagaland.

"2. *The Ministry-Incharge:* The Nagaland shall be under the Ministry of External Affairs, the Government of India.

"3. *The Governor of Nagaland:* (1) The President of India shall appoint a Governor for Nagaland and he will be vested with the executive powers of the Government of Nagaland and he will function from the headquarters of the Nagaland. (2) His administrative secretariat will be headed by a Chief Secretary stationed at the headquarters with other secretariat staff as necessary. (3) The Governor shall have special responsibility with regard to law, order and police during transitional period only.

"4. *Council of Ministers:* (1) There shall be a council of ministers (viz. six ministers and three deputy ministers) with a Chief Minister as the head to assist and advise the Governor in the exercise of his functions. (2) The council of ministers shall be responsible to the Nagaland legislative assembly.

"5. *The Legislature:* There shall be constituted a Legislative Assembly consisting of elected and nominated members as may be deemed necessary representing different tribes. (Further, a duly constituted body of experts may be formed to examine and determine the principles of representation on democratic basis.)

"6. *Representation in the Parliament:* Three elected members shall

The draft constitution was signed by Messrs Jasokie, secretary, Dr. Imkongliba, president, S. Chubatoshi, joint secretary, and Vizol, vice-president of the Naga People's Convention.

represent Nagaland in the Union parliament, i.e. two in the Lok Sabha and one in the Rajya Sabha.

"7. *Acts of Parliament:* No Act or Law passed by the Union Parliament affecting the following provisions shall have legal force in Nagaland unless specifically applied to it by a majority vote of the Naga legislative assembly: (1) The religious or social practices of the Nagas; (2) Naga customary laws and procedure; (3) Civil and criminal justice so far as these concern decisions according to Naga customary laws; (4) The ownership and transfer of land and its resources.

"8. *Local Self-Government:* Each tribe shall have the following units of law-making and administrative local bodies to deal with matters concerning the respective tribes and areas: (1) the village council, (2) The range council, (3) the tribal council. (These councils will also deal with disputes and cases involving breaches of customary laws and usages.)

"9. *Administration of Justice:* (a) Each tribe shall have the following courts of justice: (1) The village court; (2) the range court, (3) the tribal court; (b) appellate courts: (1) The district court-cum-sessions court (for each district), High Court and Supreme Court of India; and (2) The Naga tribunal (for the whole of Nagaland in respect of cases decided according to customary law.

"10. *Administration of Tuensang District:* (1) The Governor shall carry on the administration of the Tuensang district for a period of 10 (ten) years until such time when the tribes in the Tuensang district are capable of shouldering more responsibilities of the advanced system of administration. The commencement of ten-year period of administration will start simultaneously with the enforcement of detailed workings of the Constitution in the other parts of Nagaland. (2) Provided further that a regional council shall be formed for Tuensang district by elected representatives from all the tribes in Tuensang district and the Governor may nominate representatives to the regional council as well. The Deputy Commissioner will be the Ex-Officio Chairman of the council. This regional council, will elect members to the Naga legislative assembly to represent Tuensang district. (3) Provided further that on the advice of the regional council, steps will be taken to start various council and courts in those areas where the people feel themselves capable of establishing such institutions. (4) Provided further that no Act or Law passed by the Naga legislative assembly shall be applicable to Tuensang district unless specifically recommended by the regional council. (5) Provided further that the regional council shall supervise

and guide the working of the various councils and tribal courts within Tuensang district and wherever deemed necessary depute the local officer to act as chairman thereof. (6) Provided further that councils of such areas inhabited by a mixed population or which have not as yet decided to which specific tribal council to be affiliated to, shall be directly under the regional council for the time being. And at the end of ten years the situation will be reviewed and if the people so desire the period will be further extended.

"11. *Financial Assistance from the Government of India:* To supplement the revenues of Nagaland, there will be a need for the Government of India to pay out from the Consolidated Fund of India as grants-in-aid as follows: (1) Lump sum as may be necessary each year for the development programme in Nagaland, and (2) Grant-in-aid towards meeting the cost of the administration of Nagaland.

"12. *Re-transfer of Reserve Forests:* All the Reserved Forests and other Naga areas that were transferred out of Naga area will be returned to Nagaland with a clearly defined boundary under the present settlement.

"13. *Consolidation of Contiguous Naga Area:* The other Naga tribes inhabiting the areas contiguous to the present Nagaland be allowed to join Nagaland if they so desire.

"14. *Formation of Separate Naga Regiment:* In order that the Naga people can fulfil their desire of playing a full role in the defence forces of India, the question of raising a separate Naga regiment should be duly examined for action.

"15. *Transitional Period:* (a) On reaching the political settlement with Government of India, the Naga People's Convention shall appoint a body to draft the details of the constitution for the Nagaland on the basis of the settlement. (b) There shall be constituted an interim body with elected representatives from every tribe to assist and advise the Governor in the administration of Nagaland during the transitional period. The tenure of office of the members of the interim body will be three years subject to re-election.

"16. *Inner Line Regulation:* The Rules embodied in the Bengal Eastern Frontier Regulation, 1873 shall remain in force in Nagaland.

The following special Resolutions were also appended to the 16-point Memorandum: "(1) The Naga Peoples' Convention records its deep appreciation to the administration for the various welfare activities and the progress made in the administration of the area. (2) The Naga Peoples' Convention further requests the administra-

tion to extend the following amnesty in order to expedite restoration of peace in Nagaland and to effectively implement the provisions of the political settlement arrived at with the Government of India: (i) To consider favourably the release of the Naga political prisoners; (ii) to extend further, general pardon to the underground people coming overground; (iii) to relax military partrolling, operations and other restrictions to enable free contact between overground and underground people during the amnesty period. (3) Naga People's Convention further appeals to the Naga people in general, and the aggrieved families in particular, to extend the same general pardon to the underground people coming overground and also we appeal to all underground Nagas to stop all sorts of violent activities from now on. (4) The Convention further requests the co-operation of every tribe to take effective steps to bring normalcy in the country. (5) The Naga Peoples' Convention once again invites the underground people to come overground and to participate fully in the running of the new Government of Nagaland. (6) (a) A working committee with three representative from every tribe be formed to see to the implementation of the decisions of the third session of the Naga Peoples' Convention held at Mokokchung in October, 1959; (b) The working committee be entrusted to select a body to be called the negotiating body who will make such contacts and negotiations, both with the Government of India and the Naga underground people, to arrive at an amicable political settlement, and by all means, representatives of the underground people could also be taken in as members of the negotiating body. The formulation and the process of arriving at a conclusion out of these negotiations should be done within one month of its inception; (c) The negotiating body be fully authorised to make such minor changes in the course of the negotiations, if deemed necessary, unless when the question of fundamental principles and policies are involved."

Further, the Convention appealed to the underground Nagas to accept the Government's offer of amnesty and to co-operate sincerely in running the proposed new Government of Nagaland. The Committee set up to negotiate with the Central government was also empowered to contact the rebels as well individually or collectively as far as possible and to co-opt of them who would be ready to take part in the negotiations.

The relinquishment of the demand for an independent Nagaland separate from India, by the leaders of moderate Convention marked a turning point in the Naga constitutionalism and was undoubtedly

a big climb-down in the Naga question hanging fire for many years at issue. The proposal itself was a far-reaching document in moderationism. Yet the Phizoites still preferred to gloat over the thought of complete independence and turned deaf ear to the demands of realities of the situation and prudence. They kept on their subversive guerilla activities, although their numbers had fallen considerably getting killed, wounded and arrested as before while some others as stated by Mrs. Lakshmi Menon, the Deputy Minister for External Affairs on 24 September 1958 were persuaded to leave the path of impetuosity in the name of Christ as most of the rebels were Christians. At this very time Phizo flew out of Nagaland in mysterious circumstances to East Pakistan.

Concomitantly the establishment of the Naga Hills-Tuensang Area stirred up new imagination and problems so as came out the obstreperous demand for a separate hill state, from the other tribal people particularly the Khasis, Garos, Mizos and the other in the hills and plains remaining as the tribal districts which Assam was ruling in the old British pattern. It was precisely on this issue, that the Congress in the hill areas was badly defeated during the General Elections of 1957.

FORMATION OF NAGALAND STATE

Pursuant to the resolution of the third Naga People's Convention, a delegation comprising of 15 Naga leaders¹ headed by Dr. Imkongliba, the President of the Convention and the Central government reached an agreement on 30 July 1960 for the establishment of a separate Naga state within Indian Union. This agreement was the outcome of the series of talks between the senior officials of the External Affairs Ministry and Prime Minister, and the Naga delegation in New Delhi on July 26 and 27². While the Government substantially conceded the aspirations of the Nagas as set out in the proposals couched in the sixteen points of the Convention, there were a few exorbitant proposals which the Government of India did not directly reject but kept on record for future consideration. The points of agreement were as follows:

First, as regards the original Clause B, Governor's special responsibility with regard to law and order, would be there "for so long

¹ Important leaders among others were Jasokie, Chubatoshi Jamir, Chiten Jamir, Khelhoshe, Ram Thepfulo Nakhro (T.N. Augami), P. Deme and Thangang. In addition, there were four consultants, namely Shilu, H. Zopianga, Sashimeren Aiyer and Goyiopra.

² See Morarji Desai, *The Story of My Life*, V2, Delhi, 1974. p. 178.

as the law and order situation continues to remain disturbed on account of hostile activities. In exercising this special responsibility, the Governor shall, after consultation with the ministry, act in his individual judgement. This special responsibility of the Governor will cease when normalcy returns."

Second, the Convention delegation asked for three members of the Parliament i.e., two to the Lok Sabha and one to Rajya Sabha. However, it was agreed to two, each of the Parliament because of the prevalent reason that in such elections in other states would take place on the basis of proportional representation of the population.

Third, it was added to clause 7, that "the existing laws relating to administration of civil and criminal justice as provided in the rules for the administration of justice and police in the Naga Hills district shall continue to be in force."

Fourth, regarding the financial assistance from the Government of India in the forms of lump sum and grant-in-aid, proposals for these grants would be prepared and submitted by the Government of Nagaland to the Government of India for its approval. The Governor would have general responsibility for ensuring that these funds are expended for the purposes for which they have been approved.

Fifth, the delegation placed its claim on the Reserve Forests to be incorporated into Nagaland. The claim arose from the fact that the Reserved Forests which formed part of the Naga Hills district from 1882 to 1903 were transferred to Sibsagar and Nowgong districts of Assam for administrative convenience as the Naga Hills also was one of the districts of Assam till 1957. The Government pointed out its inability to decide at the moment and on the insistence of the delegation, it was placed on record:

"The Naga delegation discussed the question of inclusion of Reserve Forests and of contiguous areas inhabited by the Nagas. They were referred to Provisions in Articles 3 and 4 of the Constitution, prescribing the procedure for the transfer of area from one State to another."

Finally, the 13 points of the Convention mentioned the integration of Naga areas particularly Manipur, Tirap division of NEFA, North Cachar and Mikir Hills of Assam into Nagaland, being a great desire of the Naga people as a whole, since they were divided into Assam, Manipur and Burma by the British government. Under certain circumstances, the Government could not accept it at the moment. But at the wish of the Naga delegates, it was placed on record:

"The Naga leaders expressed the view that other Naga-inhabited contiguous areas should be enabled to join the new State. It was pointed out to them on behalf of the Government of India that Articles 3 and 4 of the Constitution provided for increasing the area of any State, but that it was not possible for the Government of India to make any commitment in this regard at this stage".

Commenting on the agreement for the proposal of a Nagaland state in India, Phizo, the President of the Naga National Council denounced it in London on 30 July 1960, saying that the Naga struggle was for a complete sovereign, independent Naga state having international recognition and which at best could have treaty relations with India on the basis of equality and reciprocity and added that the leaders of the Naga People's Convention who signed for the Naga state in India was a puppet assembly; and no agreement could be recognized regarding the future of Nagaland except with those people who were fighting and were the true representatives of the Naga nation. On the other day, Phizo wrote: "In occupied France, Norway, Belgium, there also came 'moments when responsible people chose co-operation instead of futile warfare'. They were tragic moments, laying up a store of hatred, division and bitterness for the future. Just as the mass of the people of those countries wished the struggle to end in their country's total liberation, so do the Naga people intend to liberate Nagaland and to enjoy the full independence which is theirs by right. The members of the Naga People's Convention who have signed an agreement with India for statehood within the Indian Union are well-meaning people driven to a desperate and short-sighted manoeuvre by the years of suffering and massacre which India has inflicted on Nagaland. Far from denouncing these men, I have appealed to the Nagas to forgive them for the betrayal they have foolishly brought about. The Naga people will not accept the Indian bribe of statehood, nor India's offer of 'internal autonomy' as something to be eulogised: it is only a means to conceal her heinous crime against humanity. Neither Nagaland nor India can honestly work it out in good faith, which could bring about full independence."¹

Bidding defiance to the Nagaland state, the Federal government stepped up their guerrilla activities in Naga-inhabited areas in Assam, Manipur and Burma. The Indian government armed forces also tightened their belts to trim their fangs. The rebels attacked the trains in Assam which constituted a threat to the state's food

supply. All trains had now to be protected by military escorts. They shot down an IAF Dakota on 26 August 1960 and captured four crewmen "to demonstrate, through physical violence, their disapproval of the Government of India's agreement with the Naga People's Convention."¹

Despite warnings, threats and intimidations by the rebels to the leaders of the moderate Nagas, there had been going on economic, social, educational, cultural reconstruction and development schemes for the Nagas. The official figures published in July 1960 showed that Rs 26,284,000 (£1,961,300) had been spent since 1956 on the welfare services in the Naga Hills-Tuensang Area, and it included education, medical facilities, improved agricultural production, water supplies, electrification and road development. There were one technical, 7 high, 49 middle and 402 primary schools, with over 47,000 students on rolls; education was free, and in the backward Tuensang district, all students received free rations, books and clothes also. The number of hospitals had increased from 12 in 1957 to 24. Agricultural schemes were in progress for bringing hills under terrace and jhum cultivation, augmenting irrigation facilities, providing necessary inputs and introducing co-operative farming. A plan to bring water supply to every village was being carried out with speed, and would be completed by the middle of the third Five Year Plan. Such development works, however, sketchy and insufficient vis-a-vis huge morass of backwardness, were in a subtle manner, bringing about a change in outlook regarding their attitude towards Indian government and they no more thought of wedging themselves away from it and follow an insurgent path. As a result, the situation was fast returning to normalcy despite some irksome disturbances occurring far between.

On 15-22 December 1960, for the first time, the Indian government allowed a press party consisting of six Indian and five foreign correspondents, under an official escort, to go to Kohima and suburbs to see and report about the situation as it obtained in Nagaland. They met civil and military officials, leaders of the Convention and the supporters of the underground although they were not allowed to meet the men of the Federal government. Thereafter they reported in their respective papers for the situation arisen out of the demand of freedom in Nagaland after having stayed 8 days in Kohima. *The Statesman* correspondent's comment on the situation and allegation of "atrocities" by the Army is worthy of recall

¹ Prem Bhatia. *The Times of India*, September 13, 1960.

here: "The hostiles are finding it difficult to explain to their supporters what greater benefit they would derive from a sovereign Nagaland than from a separate Naga state. The Nagas want their land to be ruled by themselves. They want to manage their own affairs, by which most of them mean domestic or internal affairs...They dislike the presence in Nagaland of people from other Indian states. This according to a senior member of the Indian Civil Service, is natural. Nagaland, he explains, was regarded as a frontier area before independence. There were few Indian officers in the area then. Suddenly in 1947 all British officers were withdrawn, and overnight they were replaced by Indian officers of whom Nagas had seen little and knew less... The methods adopted by the security forces to fight the campaign of violence in its early years...perhaps unavoidably increased Naga dislike of other Indians. Apart from the incidents which flowed actually from implementation of the accepted methods, these were excesses. 60 to 70 complaints of killing of villagers by troops running amuck and of assaults on women have been received by the authorities, who have inquired into them and punished those guilty. The hostiles have alienated the sympathy of villagers by ruthless methods of extorting co-operation and supplies, while the security forces have become unpopular through punitive measures...The authorities do not deny that in some cases burning of villages can be attributed to action by the security forces...The grouping of villagers, where it was done, was intended to bring them nearer the checkpoints and done in some cases at the instances of villagers who had felt insecure otherwise. But the proposals did not all originate from the villagers. Where they did not, the grouped villages can be loosely described as concentration camps. The grouping of villages made it difficult for the hostiles to obtain supplies".

The Convention had appealed to the rebel Nagas to accept the Government's offer of amnesty, abandon the idea of independence and co-operate in running the proposed new Government of Nagaland state which the Indian government granted it as a recognition of extraordinarily interesting revolt. Dr. Imkongliba said on 18 November 1960 that the rebels were seriously considering the Convention's proposals, although there might not be a quick response, since they had committed very deeply to independence. The acceptance of the Central government to the moderate demand of the moderate political sentiment among the Nagas proved to be great political and physical instrument to isolate and put down those hostile elements who were still at large fighting a guerilla

campaign for the cause of their sovereignty.

After the Delhi agreement between the Naga delegation and the Central government, the Working Committee of the Convention met at Mokokchung on 22 August 1960 and ratified the agreement. The Nagalan¹ Provisional Regulation was promulgated in 1961 to make the way ready for the creation of the State of Nagaland in the Union of India. But the Indian military operations against the rebels continued throughout 1961. Such measures inside Nagaland forced the rebels to seek shelter into Sibsagar, North Cachar-Mikir areas of Assam, Manipur and Burma where the Nagas live in sizeable numbers. The Burmese government felt such intrusions by the Nagas as violation of their territorial sovereignty and took the most serious view of any part of Burma being used as a base for carrying out operations against a friendly neighbouring country, India, and declared that it would take every measure open to them to deal with bands of armed Nagas found to be operating in their territory.¹

First of all, the Bill of the Nagaland state was considered by the executive council and the interim body of the Naga Convention which, since January 1962, had functioned respectively as the *de facto* cabinet at the legislature of Nagaland, and also by the Assam state assembly. Moving a resolution in the state Assembly on 6 August 1962, B. P. Chaliha, the Chief Minister of Assam, said that the Bill was not conducive to national solidarity, co-ordinated development and political stability of the eastern region of India, however he appreciated the feelings of members of the Legislative Assembly who expressed regret at the "disintegration of Assam". While noting that the Central government was committed to setting up a separate State of Nagaland, the resolution was adopted on the following day. Secondly, the two bills were introduced in the Lok Sabha by the Prime Minister, Nehru on August 21, and were debated together on August 28. The Bills were welcomed by the representatives of all parties except Jan Sangh, although both Communist and the Swatantra party spokesmen criticised the powers vested in the Governor as being too wide.

Trivedi, the Jan Sangh leader said that there is every likelihood of the process of disintegration which begins today at the eastern end will not be confined to Nagaland. Replying to the debate, Pandit Nehru justified Governor's special powers on the ground that the Governor should assume part of the burden of dealing with the abnormal situation and not leave it actively to the

¹ Jawaharlal Nehru's statement in the Lok Sabha, April 19, 1961.

Centre. He, however, gave an assurance that these powers would end when the situation was entirely normal. The Thirteenth Amendment Bill of Constitution was passed on the same day (28 August 1962) 315 votes to 5, whilst the State of Nagaland bill was passed unanimously on the following day. After being passed by the Rajya Sabha on September 3, the two Bills received the assent of the President on September 4, and became Acts which were put into effect when the Nagaland state came into force as the sixteenth State of the Indian Union. The Thirteenth Amendment (1962) provided, along with the creation of Nagaland under the State of Nagaland Act (1962), for certain special protections to the Nagas. According to these, notwithstanding anything in the Constitution, no Act of Parliament in respect of religious or social practices of the Nagas, a Naga customary law and procedure, administration of civil and criminal justice involving decisions according to Naga customary law and ownership and transfer of land and its resources, should apply to the State of Nagaland unless the Legislative Assembly of Nagaland by a resolution so decided. The Amendment also provided for the vesting of certain special responsibilities in the Governor of Nagaland.

But the text of the Thirteen Amendmenth Act 1962 of the Constitution is quoted here in full to aid better comprehension of the reader as follows: "371A. (1) Notwithstanding anything in this Constitution—(a) no Act of Parliament in respect of—(i) religious or social practices of the Nagas, (ii) Naga customary law and procedure, (iii) administration of civil and criminal justice involving decisions according to Naga customary law, (iv) ownership and transfer of land and its resources, shall apply to the State of Nagaland unless the Legislative Assembly of Nagaland by a resolution so decides; (b) the Government of Nagaland shall have special responsibility with respect to law and order in the state of Nagaland for so long as in his opinion internal disturbance occurring in the Naga Hills Tuensang Area immediately before the formation of that state continue therein or in any part thereof and in the discharge of his functions in relation thereto the Governor shall, after consulting the Council of Ministers, exercise his individual judgment as to the action to be taken: Provided that if any question arises whether any matter is or is not a matter as respects which the Governor is, under this sub-clause required to act in the exercise of his individual judgment, the decision of the Governor in his discretion shall be final, and the validity of anything done by the Governor shall not be called in question on the ground that he ought or ought not to have

acted in the exercise of his individual judgment: Provided further that if the President on receipt of a report from the Governor or otherwise is satisfied that it is no longer necessary for the Governor to have special responsibility with respect to law and order in the State of Nagaland, he may by order direct that the Governor shall cease to have such responsibility with effect from such date as may be specified in the order ; (c). in making his recommendation with respect to any demand for a grant, the Governor of Nagaland shall ensure that any money provided by the Government of India out of the Consolidated Fund of India for any specific service or purpose is included in the demand for a grant relating to that service or purpose and not in any other demand ; (d) as from such date as the Governor of Nagaland may by public notification in this behalf specify, there shall be established a regional council for the Tuensang district consisting of thirty-five members and the Governor shall in his discretion make rules providing (i) the composition of the regional council and the number in which the members of the regional council, shall be chosen: Provided that the Deputy Commissioner of the Tuensang district shall be the chairman of the regional council shall be elected by the members thereof from amongst themselves: (ii) the qualifications for being chosen as, and for being, members of the regional council; (iii) the term of office and the salaries and allowances, if any, to be paid to members of the regional council; (iv) the procedure and conduct of business of the regional council; (v) the appointment of officers and staff of the regional council and their conditions of service; and (v) any other matter in respect of which it is necessary to make rules for the constitution and proper functioning of the regional council.

“(2) Notwithstanding anything in this Constitution, for a period of ten years from the date of the formation of the State of Nagaland or for such further period as the Governor may, on the recommendation of the regional council, by public notification specify in this behalf, (a) the administration of the Tuensang district shall be carried on by the Governor; (b) where any money is provided by the Government of India to the Government of Nagaland to meet the requirements of the State of Nagaland as a whole, the Governor shall in his discretion arrange for an equitable allocation of that money between the Tuensang district and the rest of the State; (c) no Act of the legislature of Nagaland shall apply to the Tuensang district unless the Governor, on the recommendation of the regional council, by public notification so directs and the Governor in giving such direction with respect to any such Act may direct that the Act

shall in its application to the Tuensang district or any part thereof have effect subject to such exceptions or modifications as the Governor may specify on the recommendation of the regional council: Provided that any direction given under this sub-clause may be given so as to have retrospective effect; (d) the Governor may make regulations for the peace, progress and government of the Tuensang district and any regulations so made may repeal or amend with retrospective effect, if necessary, any Act of Parliament or any other law which is for the time being applicable to that district; (e) (i) one of the members representing the Tuensang district in the Legislative Assembly of Nagaland shall be appointed Minister for Tuensang affairs by the Governor on the advice of the Chief Minister and the Chief Minister in tendering his advice shall act on the recommendation of the majority of the members as aforesaid; (ii) The Minister for Tuensang affairs shall deal with, and have direct access to the Governor on all matters relating to the Tuensang district but he shall keep the Chief Minister informed about the same; (f) notwithstanding anything in the foregoing provisions of this clause, the final decision on all matters relating to the Tuensang district shall be made by the Governor in his discretion; (g) in Articles 54 and 55 and clause (4) of Article 80, references to the elected members of the Legislative Assembly of a State or to each such member shall include references to the members or member of the Legislative Assembly of Nagaland elected by the regional council established under this article; (h) in Article 170 (i) clause (i) shall, in relation to the Legislative Assembly of Nagaland, have effect as if for the word 'sixty', the words 'forty-six' had been substituted; (ii) in the said clause, the reference to direct election from territorial constituencies in the State shall include election by the members of the regional council established under this article; (iii) in clauses (2) and (3), reference to territorial constituencies shall mean references to territorial constituencies in the Kohima and Mokokchung districts.

“(3) If any difficulty arises in giving effect to any of the foregoing provisions of this article, the President may by order do (anything, including any adaptation or modification of any other article) which appears to him to be necessary for the purpose of removing that difficulty: Provided that no such order shall be made after the expiration of three years from the date of the formation of the State of Nagaland. *Explanation.*—In this article, the Kohima, Mokokchung and Tuensang districts shall have the same meanings as in the State of Nagaland Act, 1962”.¹

¹ See *The Constitution (Thirteenth Amendment) Act, 1962*.

INTERIM ARRANGEMENT

The concept and working of interim measure in Nagaland was concretely conceived at the first Kohima Convention held in 1957 as we have shown, under the sponsorship of Assam government. But the interim arrangement came into practice only when the Working Committee of the Convention meeting at Mokokchung on 22 August 1960 took the decision to set up an Interim Body, with a maximum membership of 12, to advise the Governor in the administration of the Naga Hills-Tuensang Area, until the creation of the State of Nagaland. Sometime later, the Committee decided to have 40 members in the Interim Body which would consist of five from Angami tribe, four from each of the major Naga tribes and two from each of the minor tribes. The Interim council would in turn choose three or four advisers who would be stationed at Kohima and would advise the authorities in day-to-day administration of the area. It would meet once in three months to review the work of the advisers. Finally, the President, Dr. Rajendra Prasad promulgated the Nagaland Transitional Provisions Regulation for the administration of Nagaland during the transitional period in 1961, according to which an Interim Body of 42 elected representatives of the Naga tribes would act for three years as an advisory council to the Governor who, on its recommendations, would appoint not more than five of its members to serve as an Executive Council. It would be empowered to discuss and make recommendations on matters of administration involving general policy and development schemes, elections to the Legislative Assembly, and any matters referred to it by the Executive Council. The Executive Council would advise and assist the Governor in the exercise of his functions other than finance and maintenance of law and order and on matters specified by the Governor. The provision for the election of village and tribal councils was also made.

The members of Interim Body that would act as such as the provisional legislature before the establishment and function of the State, were sworn in on 18 February 1961 at Kohima, in the presence of General S. M. Srinagesh, the Governor of Assam. They pledged themselves to the Constitution of India before a gathering of 8,000 persons drawn from the different areas of the Naga Hills-Tuensang Area. Speaking on the occasion Governor, Srinagesh said that the aim of the newly set-up body was that, they might set aside the past and start afresh, and the Governor and the people acting as one, should bring a new and happier light into the darkness that clouded the Naga Hills during these last few years of strife and bitterness.

Dr. Imkongliba, the President of the People's Convention also appealed to the rebels to abandon violence and not to sabotage the final decision of the majority Naga people who wanted, "no more bloodshed, suffering and misery".

Dr. Imkongliba, a medical practitioner and a former comrade of Phizo, who had defected from the Naga National Council in protest against its cult of violence to work for convenement of the moderate Naga People's Convention, was elected Chairman of the Interim Body. Shilu, another ex-follower of Phizo and a civil servant under the Government of Assam became the Chairman of the Executive Council.

The first Executive Council of Nagaland consisting of Messrs Shilu (Chairman), Jasokie, Chiten Jamir, Hokishe and Akum Imkong, were sworn in at Shillong on 16 March 1961 by the Assam and Nagaland Governor, General S. M. Srinagesh. But the sense of traditional free life and the desire for independence still formed an atmosphere sizeably great for Imkongliba and his party to suppress in the long run. Consequently Dr. Imkongliba was shot dead by a rebel Naga in contempt of his stand against the Naga independence at Mokokchung on August 22, while returning home from his dispensary, after the previous attempt on his life was foiled in December 1960. Thepfülo Nakhro was unanimously elected as his successor and M. Kithan as his Deputy.

At the second session of the Interim Body held at Kohima on 21 September 1961, it was demanded in a series of resolutions that the Interim Body and Executive Council should function as legislature and a *defacto* cabinet with authority over all tribal and village council and other administrative bodies and Commissioner's office as a secretariat under a Chief Secretary; and that the Adviser to the Governor (an official resident at Shillong) should have no scope for interference in the affairs of Nagaland. Later on, Shilu, Chairman of Executive Council, complained on October 22 that the finance, law and order, control of which was reserved to the Governor under the transitional regulation promulgated in 1 January 1961, overlapped the entire field of administration and left little scope for the Executive Council. After the talks between the Prime Minister, Pt. Nehru and the Executive Councillors, the demand of more powers of the Interim Body was acceded by the Central government.

The third session of the Interim Body which was held at Mokokchung in January 1962, was sharply divided over a proposal that negotiations should be opened with the Naga Federal government. At last a compromise resolution was adopted by a majority of one

vote recommending that a general meeting open to all the Nagas should be held in March to find out a peaceful solution of the Naga problem. This decision was followed by a great increase in rebel attacks on civil installations, on road/rail traffic. Above all, Phizo welcomed the resolution in a letter written to Shilu, Chairman of the Executive Council on 26 February 1962 and applied to the Indian High Commission in London for an assurance of safe conduct to enable him to attend the proposed conference. The Indian High Commission in a press communique stated that "the question of settling internal differences among the Nagas is a matter for the consideration of the Government of Nagaland and the Naga people." All these developments found untenable to the tender situation and accrued to the fears of Executive Council that the rebels would exploit the conference to strengthen their position and as such it was postponed indefinitely. On the other hand, Mrs. Lakshmi Menon, Minister of State for External Affairs told the Lok Sabha on 27 April 1962 that the Indian High Commission in London had informed the British government that the grant of British citizenship to Phizo would not confer on him the right of free entry into India, and that he might be arrested if he tried to enter the country.

Meantime, Phizo claimed that General Cariappa, former Commander-in-Chief of the Indian army approached him through an influential Indian in London to help in the release of the four Indian Air Force men taken by rebels as prisoners while the efforts of Indian army units in Nagaland to search them were frustrated by the difficulty of the locked terrain. In a letter to Phizo, the prisoners told him that they were in "danger of death from heavy operations by the Indian army and Air Force...bombing and firing rockets by jet aircraft and...many people have been killed and injured." Soon after, Phizo had stated, "now that the Indian government has persisted in its deceitful and intransigent policy, refusing impartial observers, refusing negotiations for a peaceful settlement, refusing opportunities for a free note of the Naga people without Indian military's suppression and coercion—the responsibility for the inevitable civil war which their past and present policy is engendering, with even graver responsibility in the near future, must rest wholly on the Indian government."

On the whole, the strength of the underground Nagas declined in 1962. A large section of the rebels had lost faith in their leaders on account of their crude leadership and management of the movement and now favoured the abandonment of fighting, while others interested to go on their activities by raiding villages, forcibly recru-

iting young men and women to the Federal Naga army, compelling the villagers to supply them with money and provisions, and forcing the people to work as porters. Such contemptuous acts became intolerable to the villagers. Clashes between the opposing groups of rebels took place in the Tuensang area in the first half of January 1962 in one of which a high-ranking hostile leader namely 'General' Hothrong was killed. Unable to succeed in his virtual attempt to negotiate with Indian government on the question of Indian military bases in Nagaland and other matters, Phizo placed on 21 January 1962 the genocide committed by Indian troops against the Nagas before the International Commission of Jurists. On March 15 some rebels raided six non-Naga villages in the North Cachar Hills, murdered a villager, wounded several others, looted their houses and burnt them down to the ground for their disloyalty to the Federal government. But the incidents of such type greatly hardened the feelings against the rebels among the villagers, and a leading part in the suppression of the rebellion was played by the village quarrels and a Naga force, about 3000, commanded by regular Indian army officers. This force, many members of which were themselves former rebels, with an intimate knowledge of the terrain, achieved a remarkable success not only in hunting them down but also in winning many of them over. However, the rebels, estimated about to 2000 men led by the Federal Commander-in-Chief, General Kaito operated from the Ukhrul Naga area of Manipur and the bases inside Burma, until they were driven out by the Burmese forces in the early months of the year and their headquarters were destroyed by the Indian security forces.

On 29 May 1962 the Interim Body declared in its fourth session that Phizo had no right to speak for the Nagas since he had become a British citizen at his own request in 1962 in whatever circumstances might be and was verily a man "condemned by his own people and the law of the land." It called upon the underground Nagas to come overground under amnesty offer and partake in the welfare activities of the people in Nagaland.

Around the same time Federal government released four Indian airmen, who were kept as prisoners by them since August 1960, after the Burmese army had negotiated with the rebels for their release at the request of the Indian Government. They were handed over to the Burmese at a frontier-post and subsequently flown to India. They were received warmly by the Defence Minister, of India, V.K. Krishna Menon. The rebels ambushed a patrol party of the Assam Rifles in the Ukhrul area on May 7, killing five soldiers and a bearer.

Strong reinforcements were thereupon rushed to the area for mopping-up operations. Sporadic raids on villages and acts of terrorism still continued. Phanting Phom, an Interim Body member was shot dead on August 29. Between April-July 1962, 360 rebels were captured; 113 surrendered and in July and August 120 rebel hide-outs were destroyed.

The Executive Chairman, Shilu appealed to the Federal government on 27 October 1962, to abandon their imbecile struggle and join in the defence of the country against the Chinese aggression. He subsequently announced on November 6, that the Union government had agreed to raise a Naga regiment in the Indian army and called upon the Nagas to avail themselves of this opportunity. He again said on December 15, that hundreds of young Nagas had joined the National Volunteer Force, and many had gone to the frontier to fight against the enemy. Many of the rebel leaders had surrendered, and most of them had also been given suitable jobs.

The Naga People's Convention had set up a Committee to devise the means of approaching the remaining rebels of the Federal government to persuade them to join in the defence efforts and the Naga administration would consider the question of offering an amnesty to the rebels provided they gave in a guarantee of good behaviour and promised to give up guerrilla warfare.

Following the withdrawal of Indian army division from Nagaland to the vulnerable borders during the Chinese aggression, the Naga Federal government reanimated and intensified their activities from November 1962 onwards; over 300 loyal people were kidnapped by them between November 1962 and April 1963. The rebels who had fled into the Chittagong hill tract and other places in East Pakistan in May 1962, returned secretly through the Mizo Hills into Burma; whence they made a number of raids into Manipur but were repelled by Indian forces; Churachandpur, Tengnoupal and Tamenglong sub-divisions of Manipur were declared as disturbed areas on 16 February 1963. The Prime Minister, Pt. Nehru said in the Lok Sabha on April 8, that the rebels had recently obtained some new arms, but he could not say whether they were getting them from Pakistan or from China. Shilu, however, claimed on April 11 that it was a "confirmed fact" that the rebels were armed with weapons from Pakistan, an allegation strongly denied on April 15 by Z.A. Bhutto, the Foreign Minister of Pakistan.¹ About 40 rebels blew up the track on the Mariani-Lumding section of the North East Frontier Railway on April 9, derailing the engine and four coaches, then

¹ J. Nehru's statement in the Lok Sabha on April 8 and August 26, 1963.

opened fire, and ransacked it killing three soldiers and three civilians and injuring 27 others. Another train was fired at in the same area two days later. On April 13, the Air Force had attacked rebel camps on two occasions.

After the refusal of the Government of India to Phizo's offer of the Nagas for fighting against the Chinese on the condition that India would grant recognition to an independent state of Nagaland, Phizo again sent a letter to the Prime Minister, Pt. Nehru through Rev. Michael Scott on 21 February 1963. The Prime Minister referred the letter to the Nagaland Executive Council, who expressed their opinion clear that while there would be no harm in meeting Phizo, the time might not be the most appropriate and propitious for such a move on March 19. In his reply sent through the Indian High Commission in London, Pt. Nehru expressed his willingness to meet Phizo and to give him all facilities for coming to India, provided the rebels would first end all violent activities and surrender their arms; as a result, the Government of India would then try to rehabilitate those requiring rehabilitation, and other matters could be considered. In his second letter to Nehru on April 3, Phizo proposed that Rev. Scott should meet the Naga National Council to ask them to observe a cease-fire from April 14, and that the Indian government should issue similar instructions to their forces simultaneously.

Putting in earnest efforts to restore peace and stabilise the Nagaland state Shilu, the Chairman of Executive Council objected Rev. Scott's visit to Nagaland on the plea that Phizo's proposals were vague and implied non-recognition of the present State of Nagaland. Accordingly in reply to Phizo's letter, Government of India stated: "willingness to work with the people of Nagaland state within the present constitutional arrangements...and to co-operate in the maintenance of law and order as the essential preliminaries to any further constructive steps for rapprochement between the underground hostiles...and the people of Nagaland. If, as he states, Phizo shares the general desire to restore peace and normalcy in Nagaland, he can immediately advise all those indulging in hostile activities... to give up violence, release those they have kidnapped, and be prepared to come overground, surrender their arms, and get rehabilitated as normal citizens of Nagaland. After such a statement is issued by Phizo, the Government of Nagaland will make a policy declaration indicating the nature and extent of rehabilitation and resettlement facilities they are prepared to give to those who come overground...The Government of India...will at the same time issue instructions to the security forces not to take any punitive

action against those who have stopped all violent activities." Thus the Government of India's reply handed over to Rev. Scott on 20 April 1963 had offered the rebels an amnesty and rehabilitation if they ceased hostilities and surrendered their weapons.

Phizo, however, stated in London on 8 May 1963 that the Government's demand for "unconditional surrender" was unacceptable. In the meantime, the unrest was most serious in the Tamenglong area of Manipur where Rani Guidiliu had gone underground in 1960 to revive her animism she preached in 1930s, to organise her people—Zeliangroung for a separate unit in Nagaland and to set against hostile activities of the rebels to her loyal people. Tamenglong was declared as a "disturbed area" when it was reported on 30 October (1963) that 10 people had been killed and 27 kidnapped in the Tamenglong sub-division as stated by Koiren Singh, the Manipur Chief Minister. The security forces were sent there to bring the situation under control.

Again, Chubatoshi (Jamir), the Prime Minister's Parliamentary Secretary for Nagaland met Phizo in London on 1-3 August 1973 and discussed the Naga problem with him in his private capacity. This recent meeting, the Prime Minister, Pandit Nehru told the Lok Sabha on September 16, (1963) was an exchange of views only although no formal proposals for the solution of the Naga problem had been put forward by either side. Chubatoshi, a fine Ao stock pointed out to Phizo during their hectic discussions that the convention leaders rose bravely against the hotbed of violence and massacre and joined the Indian Union in order to save the Nagas' sufferings and to develop their people and land. But in a number of times he said covertly as well as overtly that Nagaland became a part of India and the question of Naga independence should not be raised as it was a dead or lost issue. At times he said that the Government of India should take strong action against those Nagas who were preaching and working directly or indirectly for independence and communism. Yet the situation in Nagaland continued to be cloudy, divided, disorderly, parochial, insular as it were.

NAGALAND GOVERNMENT

The President, Dr. Radhakrishnan officially inaugurated the State of Nagaland as the sixteenth State of the Indian Union at Kohima on 1 December 1963 in the midst of thousands of jubilant Nagas clad in their traditional colourful dresses. In his inaugural speech, the President said:

"Friends,

I have great pleasure in inaugurating the new State of Nagaland. It takes an honoured place today as the sixteenth State of the Indian Union. Indian society has always been a multi-lingual, multi-racial and multi-religious one, having a variety of racial and ethnic groups —*kirata huna'ndhra pulinda pukkash abhira nanka yavanah khasadayah*.

"Though diverse in origin, all these different communities were united by a common purpose. In accord with the traditional outlook of our country, ever since the achievement of independence, attempts have been made, as your Chief Minister has just said, to see a separate Naga state within the Indian Union. These attempts to secure to you the fullest freedom to manage your own affairs have culminated in the creation of Nagaland state. The Constitution (Thirteenth Amendment) Act, 1962, setting up the new State of Nagaland, provides that no Act of Parliament in respect of (1) religious or social practices of the Nagas, (2) Naga customary law and procedure, (3) administration of civil and criminal justice involving decisions according to a Naga customary law, and (4) ownership and transfer of land and its resources, shall apply to the new State unless the Legislative Assembly of Nagaland by a resolution so decides. This way, the Constitution respects our distinctive identity.

"The Fundamental Rights enshrined in our Constitution, such as equality before law, prohibition of discrimination on grounds of religion, race, caste, sex or place of birth, equality of opportunity in matter of public employment, freedom of conscience and free profession, practice and propagation of religion, will apply to the people of Nagaland.

"The rule of law and government by the consent of the governed are the essence of democracy. Government must be the custodian of the general welfare of its people and not of any special interest. The Government must capture the hearts and minds of the people. The administrators must exercise the human, the healing touch in their relations with the people and should not deprive the Nagas of their innocent joys, their songs and dances, their feasts and festivals which are not repugnant to our moral sense.

"The special powers vested in the Governor to maintain law and order will cease to apply in the absence of any internal unrest. It is my profound hope that the people of Nagaland will whole-heartedly work under the Constitution and help to build up a prosperous and progressive state.

"You have not only the qualities of loyalty, valour and discipline

but also the habits of industry, an innate sense of beauty and artistic skill. Your women occupy prominent position in the tribal councils, etc. You have also proved your ability as civil administrators in more recent times.

"The resources of Nagaland, limited as they are, will have to be developed to the fullest extent and yet there may be need for Central assistance for purposes of development and administration. I am sure this assistance will be available for the Naga people in full measure. Considerable progress has already been made in agriculture, education, health services, communications, etc., but the pace of development will have to be speeded up. I have no doubt that whatever money is provided by the Centre will be spent for the welfare of the people of Nagaland. I do hope that all the Naga people will take the fullest advantage of the fresh opportunities afforded to them and share in the building up of prosperity and progress in the country. We are still at the beginning of a new era and much hard work lies ahead. But nothing can stem the tide of progress of India if 450 million people are determined to achieve it by hard work, discipline and determination.

"May I also express the hope that, now that the wishes of the Nagas have been fully met, normal conditions will rapidly return to the State, and those who are still unreconciled will come forward to participate in the development of Nagaland. The highest position in the country is open to every Naga : in the Parliament, in the Central Cabinet and in the various services, military and civil.

"Understanding and friendship help to build a society where hatred and violence tend to disrupt it. Let us avoid the latter and adopt the former ! On this auspicious day I make an appeal to all the Naga people : let all past rancour and misunderstanding be forgotten and let a new chapter of progress, prosperity and goodwill be written on the page which opens today. I once again say that a bright future awaits the brave people of Nagaland."

The Prime Minister Nehru also sent his message of goodwill to the people of Nagaland in which he said: "I am confident that the vigour and vitality of the people of Nagaland will not only make a substantial contribution towards the achievement of a fuller and a happier life for the people of Nagaland but will further enrich the national development of the Indian Union". Vishnu Sahay, the Governor of Assam, and Mr. Gopali Melhotra, Chief Justice of Assam, were concurrently sworn in as the Governor and as the Chief Justice of Nagaland respectively. Shilu, hitherto Chairman of the Executive Council took the oath of office as the first Chief Minis-

ter of the State of Nagaland. The other members of the Executive Council namely messrs Hokishe, Jasokie, Chiten Jamir and Akum Imkong would act as the ministers in a caretaker government until General Elections were held to the Legislative Assembly of Nagaland in January 1964 and the elected representatives of the people took over the reins of the government. Subsequently the Interim regime came to an end when the Interim legislative body was dissolved, yielding to the Council of Ministers and the Legislative Assembly of Nagaland state.

In a period of relatively political calm the first General Elections in Nagaland were held between 10-16 January 1964, resulting in the ruling political party—Naga Nationalist Party gaining an absolute majority in the 46 members of the Legislative Assembly. Partywise break-up was: Naga Nationalist Party 33; Democratic Party 11; and Independents 2. Of the Naga Nationalist candidates, 14 were returned unopposed from the Mokokchung and Kohima districts, while six from the Tuengsang district had been elected by the village council. The Chief Minister, Shilu was among those returned unopposed. A. Kevichusa, the leader of the Democratic Party (the newly formed opposition) was defeated in both the constituencies from which he contested. Of a total electorate of 1,23,156, the number of electors in those constituencies where the polling was held was 78,268. Shilu was unanimously elected leader of the Naga Nationalist Party in the new Legislative Assembly on January 22, and was confirmed as the first Chief Minister on January 25. Melhupra Vero, the downright Chakhesang moderate nationalist, whose conviction of the futility of fighting against the gaint Indian armed forces by the rebel Nagas in small number and tendency of peaceful political settlement of the problem with the Government of India made him rise into prominence, was elected to the only one seat of Nagaland in the Rajya Sabha on March 1964.

The twelve elected members of the opposition Democratic Party in the Legislative Assembly of Nagaland state resigned on 8 December 1964 and issued a statement demanding the dissolution of the Legislative Assembly, the existence of which they alleged, was obstructing a final political settlement of the Naga issue. They also proposed that Phizo should be allowed to return to Nagaland under safe conduct to participate in the search for an honourable solution to the problem.

In the by-election on 28 May 1965 the ruling Naga Nationalist Organisation won three seats and an independent candidate one

seat; in the case of other vacant seats, the nominees of the NNO were returned unopposed, giving it 45 out of 46 seats in the Assembly. These 13 seat by-elections had been caused by the resignation of all 12 members of the opposition Democratic Party and the death of a member of the Assembly as stated just above.

The Legislative Assembly of Nagaland passed a resolution adopting English as the official language of the State for administrative and educational purposes, with the recommendation that English should be recognized as national language in the Constitution. The reason of the adaption of English as the official language was based on the virtual fact that in Nagaland, the different Naga tribes speaking different languages, all of which have been written in Roman script had, no tribal language commonly spoken except the Assamese and Manipuri that the Nagas have apathy for one reason or other. Therefore, the only alternative open to them had been English which was introduced by the British government ever since they appeared on the Naga scene in the 19th century. But at the deep bottom, the vexatious sovereign problem arisen by the underground Nagas remained muddy in the relations between the Government of India and the Nagas.

The Peace Mission

"A time to kill, and a time to heal;
A time to break down, and time to build again;
A time to love, and a time to hate;
A time of war, and a time of peace."

—*Holy Bible*

RISE AND FALL OF PEACE MISSION

Disenchanted with the creation of the State of Nagaland, the rebel Nagas tenaciously continued their fighting activities as before by maintaining their Federal government, by exacting money and rations from the people, by imposing fines against those who disobeyed their authority, by forceful recruitment of young able-bodied, by kidnapping, sabotaging, raiding and firing on security posts, administrative centres, and by going to East Pakistan for arms and training at regular intervals. The reverses suffered by the Indian troops during the Chinese invasion against India and withdrawal of almost all Indian troops from Nagaland to be deployed on the borders emboldened the Nagas. Yet after unresultant fighting with desperation for some years, the rebels came to realise that a spell of peace would spur them in mobilising the public opinion in the favour of their cause and save themselves from the tide of alienating the commonplace Nagas. Phizo now mooted the idea of settling the problem peacefully as far as possible by political means, and not by force of arms on the assumption that Indian government might have changed its attitude towards the Nagas after her debacle in war with China. Besides, the underground Nagas were long yearning for a respite to organise their existing forces scientifically by recruiting fresh men and were now in a mood to talk peace, even if it was more an expediency than earnestness for rapprochement.

On the other hand, the Nagas in general were tired of the deadly continuous hostilities in the land where normal life was absent under the imposed curfew from dusk to dawn for almost a decade. Thus turning away from the revolt, they longed for peace and order. At the same time, Rev. Michael Scott came to India and met the Prime Minister, Pandit Nehru with the letters from Phizo on 21 February and 4 April 1963 after the failure of his attempt to make a Peace March from Delhi to Peking through Nagaland and Burma. The

Prime Minister, Pt. Nehru expressed his readiness to accept the Naga peace conference on the conviction that the rebels who were a potential source of armed conflict should be won over by intimate, peaceful, friendly approach and talks since military dealings had so far produced no appreciable result to find a solution to the problem, and the thorny problem should be needfully settled once for all by giving more concessions, to the extent of complete autonomy not in bits and pieces, in case they would choose to remain in India. In view of these factors, the politically inspired Baptist church leaders genuinely motivated by consideration of peace, non-violence, justice and getting the things better from worse, met in earnestness in a convention at Wokha on 24 February 1964, issued an appeal to the Government as well as the underground Nagas for restoration of peace, normalcy and order in the strife-torn state, as a practical necessity and decided to form a four-man Peace Mission comprising Rev. Michael Scott, Jayaprakash Narayan, Bimalaprosad Chaliha and Shankerrao Deo as a base for interposing between the Government of India and the Naga Federal government to initiate peace talks to reach a honourable settlement of the Naga issue which was one of the most complex and delicate problems India had ever faced since its independence. These persons were chosen by the church leaders for their known understanding, impartiality, crusading spirit and love of justice to carry on a Herculean task with all seriousness and honesty. Before proceeding further, it would be useful for us to have some knowledge about the personalities involved in the Peace Mission.

Son of a priest Percaval Caleb, Rev. Michael Scott¹ (born 1907) began his career as an ecclesiast after his formal education. At the age of 19, he went to South Africa where he worked for three years in a leper asylum and raised his voice against "apartheid". Then he served in India for some years (1934-43) as a Chaplain at the Anglican Church in Bombay and Calcutta. Here, he was influenced by Gandhism and was drawn to the freedom Movement of India. In 1943 he went back to South Africa and joined the Indians there, who were demonstrating against the segregationist policies of the White government and earned a three-month sentence. Afterwards he worked at the United Nations on behalf of the Indians in South Africa and the Hererors of South West Africa in close association with the Indian delegation there and took great part in the formation of the African Bureau. But how Rev. Scott came into contact with

¹ *A Time to Speak* (Autobiography), London, 1958.

Phizo and the Nagas can be best described as accidental and fortuitous rather than intentional. When Phizo escaped to Switzerland from Pakistan to go to U.K. in 1960 to appeal the Naga case in the West and the U.N. to do something for the Nagas, Rev. Scott got a letter from Phizo's nephew, Dr. Yallow, a physician in the United States, requesting him to help Phizo and Nagas for their just cause. For some time, he passed through an agony of indecision, but ultimately he developed heart-felt sympathy, went to Geneva and met Phizo there when he had received second letter from him (Dr. Yallow). Immediately he got in touch with Mrs. Vijayalakshmi Pandit, the Indian High Commissioner in London about Phizo, brought him to England, as he put it to give him shelter to the friendly country of India i.e. U.K. than to the enemy country and kept secret of his movements if anything could be done for the solution of the problem. But the Defence Minister, V.K. Krishna Menon, a generous son of a Nair lawyer of Malabar, whose mental domain was almost occupied by Mrs. Anne Besant's theosophy and Prof. Harold Laski's socialism before he was drawn to India's freedom struggle and Pandit Nehru's socialism, stuck to Government's policy towards Phizo and the Naga problem. Then Rev. Scott introduced Phizo to the British press to elucidate the Naga problem. In this way, Rev. Scott was involved into the Naga political issue for humanitarian and moral reasons.

The choice of Jayaprakash Narayan¹ as a member of the Peace Mission by the church leaders fell back on his background. Born in 1902 to a Bihari officer, J.P. Narayan began his political career at the age of seventeen by joining non-cooperation movement and became a leading member of the Congress as a close ally of Pt. Nehru and one of the accomplished Marxists of that party after his return from America with Communist ideology. Later on, he renounced the world of party politics in 1954 to do away divisive feature of party democracy and plunged himself actively into Gandhian Sarvodaya movement—"the uplift of all"—which Acharya Vinoba Bhave, a Maharashtrian Brahmin and one of the Gandhi's ardent disciples was trying to put into practice for the economic welfare of all Indians alike 'in line with the natural course of social evolution'. He got interested in the Naga affairs, just like Kashmir and Tibet when he saw the Nagas had some causes and a standpoint that the Government of India should have given a patient hearing and approached the problem with a view to solving it without use of force in

¹ See *Socialism to Sarvodaya*, Madras, 1956, and *Swaraj for the People*, Banaras, 1961.

Gandhian way. And how B.P. Chaliha, the Assam Chief Minister came to be associated with the Peace Mission, had been earlier stated here and there, which is enough for our knowledge in the present context.

A delegation of the Baptist church leaders met Shilu, the Chief Minister of Nagaland and appraised him of the resolution of the Convention. Under the sanction of the Government of India, the Legislative Assembly of Nagaland passed a resolution introduced by Chief Minister Shilu and on 13 March 1964 nominated a group of 13 members of the Assembly as a peace committee to assist the task of the Peace Mission. This resolution stated that "efforts be made to open every possible avenue to negotiate peace talks giving full opportunities to all sections of the people of Nagaland in mobilising public opinion to prepare the spade-work to make the proposed talks a success with the sole object of restoration of lasting peace in Nagaland; that the leaders of the Naga Baptist convention be urged to make immediate initiative to prepare groundwork, tapping the feeling of the underground people for joint peace talks with a view to ending this problem and that the underground people should take peace talks seriously and respond readily to the call of the people to put all their efforts to create a healthy atmosphere and necessary conditions for the peace talks."

With the inability of the Sarvodaya leader, Shankerrao Deo, for reasons of health, the Peace Mission now consisting of Rev. Scott, J. P. Narayan and B. P. Chaliha met at Kohima in the midst of initial burst of goodwill on all sides, to begin the deliberations of their mission of peace in April 1964 and went in for the assigned cause. The first task before the Mission was to negotiate a ceasefire agreement between the Government of India and the rebel Naga Federal government and soon after to bring the two contending parties to a conference table for a political settlement. The Peace Mission called for an end to hostile activities in order to restore peace and order in Nagaland through mutual understanding and co-operation. At a public meeting held on April 7, the far-sighted and broadminded Chaliha said that the unrest in Nagaland had caused great hardships to the common man. Further knowing the vital concern of the Naga issue to Assam, he added: "If there is no peace in Nagaland, there no peace in Assam; if there is no peace in Assam, there is no peace in Nagaland also. The destiny of the people of Nagaland and of Assam is tied together. If China come to invade they will come to NEFA, Assam as well as Nagaland and all other places. To defend their land the people of Nagaland and Assam

have to stand united." Since then, the Peace Mission members met the leaders of the Government and the underground Nagas a number of times and made feverish efforts to secure cessation of hostilities after which a political settlement was to be worked upon.

However, after the cease-fire was procured as a great achievement, the Peace Mission was not as bright as cherished much in the beginning by the Federal government of Nagaland and the Indian government alike due to the fact that the Nagas still clung to their demand of sovereignty while the latter offered them for autonomy within the Union of India only. Above all, the deep divisions existed among the underground leadership, even on the merits of truce, negotiations and political settlement. J.P. Narayan resigned from the Peace Mission on 25 February 1966 when he felt that he had forfeited the confidence of the underground Nagas as the latter took exception to his statement at Dabri on February 8, that the Indian government could be tough with them, and if it so desired could liquidate them.

After the resignation of J.P. Narayan, Rev. Scott was left as the only full-time member of the Peace Mission when Chaliha was largely occupied by his official duties, as the Assam Chief Minister. In a letter of 15 February 1966 to Mrs. Indira Gandhi, Rev. Scott proposed that an expert commission should examine the history of the Nagas to establish whether India had at any time exercised any authority over them. At the request of the Federal government, he also sent a letter to mild Burmese U Thant, Secretary-General of the United Nations, asking him for the inclusion of more foreign observers in the Peace Mission and another letter to Chairman of the Revolutionary Council of Burma, General Ne Win, protesting against his decision to check the movement of rebel Nagas from Nagaland to East Pakistan through Burmese territory. These letters probably stepped Rev. Scott to the first basic error and aroused a wave of indignation throughout India for it was blaring attempt to internationalize the Naga issue which was a purely domestic affair from the Indian point of view. And the presence of Rev. Scott at a ceremony at which the Naga underground government celebrated its "Republic Day" near Kohima on March 22, cast a shadow of doubt about his impartiality of purpose and indicated a prognostic of his mission's failure. What was more falling was that Rev. Scott had been indulging all these activities enthusiastically, on his own, without consulting other members of the Peace Mission who themselves were greatly embarrassed.

Both the Congress and the Opposition members of the Parliament

of India denounced his "anti-Indian" attitude on 11-12 April 1966 and demands were made for his expulsion or arrest. However, Mrs. Gandhi stated on April 15, that he had been given permission to stay in Nagaland for another month. But, at last, when the Government's hope of Rev. Scott serving as a useful bridge between the underground Nagas and the Government of India was belied by his "prejudicial and partisan activities," he was ordered to leave India immediately on May 3. Some documents were also seized from him before he left the country.¹

After his return to Britain, Rev. Michael Scott called on the Commonwealth Secretary, Bottomley on 12 May 1966 in his private capacity and reported to him on the Naga situation including the "confiscation" of some of his private papers by the Indian police before he was expelled. Later on he issued a long statement on May 30, in *The Times*, London in which he justified the demand of independence of the Nagas from the historical point of view and charged the Indian government of perpetuating atrocities upon the innocent Nagas. He also wrote a book—*The Nagas, India's Problem or the World's?*, to have a hold on world attention to this issue. The statement said: "After spending more than two years in Nagaland with four visits to Delhi, and having maintained silence during that time in the hope of being able to help to bring about a peace, I now feel bound to warn that I see no hope of a massacre being avoided in Nagaland, unless Delhi is large enough to invite third-party mediation of some kind, as the Nagas have proposed. I see no sign of this happening. If there is a further massacre in Nagaland, a bell will toll for more than the death of the Naga people.

"The Nagas had never been subjugated until the British came at the end of the last century and imposed a form of indirect rule, similar to their dual mandate system in Africa. This, at least, left the Nagas their own tribal administration and a strong feeling of sovereignty. The Nagas officially told the British government's Simon Commission in 1929 that, if ever Britain left India, they wanted to revert to their full independence.

"When the British departure from India was imminent, British officials advised the Nagas and the first Indian Governor of Assam, Sir Akbar Hydari, to accept a "ten-year agreement". This was duly accepted by both sides. Its ninth point provided for a "review" of the agreement at the end of ten years; the Nagas understood this to mean that they would then be free to choose their own future.

¹ The statement of Dinesh Singh, Minister of State for External Affairs in the Rajya Sabha on May 3, 1966.

"Within less than two years of signing this agreement, the ninth point was repudiated by Delhi. The other eight points, it was claimed, were included in the Sixth Schedule of the Indian constitution and were henceforth immutable. Ever since then, it has been the "integrity of the Indian constitution" and the "sovereignty of the Indian Union" which have been advanced as the grounds of India's claim that the Naga territory is part of the Indian Union.

"The purpose of the Nagaland Peace Mission (invited by the Nagaland Baptist church in April 1964) was not to apportion blame for the mistakes, misconceptions or deceptions of the past, but to interrupt the resultant war. This conflict has been going on for 15 years. It began with non-cooperation, non-payment of taxes, student strikes and the like. This produced counteraction by Delhi. A Naga home guard came into existence, originally to protect the population from collective punishments by the Indian armed forces. Gandhi had given the Nagas an assurance that "only over my dead body will the Indian army march in to occupy your land". But Gandhiji had been shot dead. The Indian occupation of Nagaland reached a proportion of between 40,000 and 50,000 soldiers to control a civil population of only about 300,000.

"A form of military rule was established with a Nagaland Defence Act, more draconian than any measure that had been imposed by the British on Bengal. A long night had descended for the Nagas. It proved easy for Delhi to isolate them from the eyes of the world in their inaccessible mountainous territory. During the worst years of this period, 1956-58, not only were many of their villages totally destroyed and their crops and granaries burnt, this often happened several times over in an attempt to stop the civil population from supporting the Naga underground army, or to punish them for the acts of the underground government. To refer to these happenings now is not for the sake of recrimination, but because they were never reported in the press of India or of the world. Nor is it intended to condone the inhumanity of the ambushes carried out by the Naga underground to secure arms.

"When the Naga villagers' homes were burnt, the people were often driven into the jungle to fend for themselves. In other cases, they were captured in thousands and were concentrated in huge armed camps enclosed by stockades for months on end. Village elders were sometimes suspended by the ankles from branches of trees and flogged continuously until they gave away information or lost consciousness. Other forms of punishment included being rolled on the ground beneath logs with guards seated on either end.

Chilli powder was rubbed into the eyes and between the legs of both men and women to make them talk. Smoke from burning chilli powder was blown into the faces of people hanging by their feet. Some Nagas were forced to dig their own graves before being interrogated. One man I met alleged that he had been made to eat and sleep in a pit, in his own excreta, for three weeks while being interrogated.

‘Churches were desecrated and burnt. Obscene acts were performed on Naga women by Indian soldiers in the churches, while the congregations were forced to gather outside. Detailed reports were given me from scores of Naga villagers with the dates and places where atrocities had been committed, together with lists of men, women and children who had died, been beaten, or raped or tortured. If a judicial commission of inquiry had been appointed, as I requested of Jawaharlal Nehru and his two successors, these reports could have been investigated. Pt. Nehru had said, when I first saw him about a cease-fire in 1963: “If you are ever able to achieve a stop to the shooting, there would then be the conditions under which an inquiry could be held. Perhaps a judge could be appointed to look into it all. Pt. Nehru died the day after agreement on a cease-fire was announced in Delhi: it was not possible to persuade the two successive Prime Ministers to agree to such an inquiry.

“The conferment of statehood within the Indian Union in 1963 failed to gain Naga political support. It always depended on the active presence of the Indian armed forces for its maintenance. I have been slowly and reluctantly driven to the conclusion that the Government of India has never taken seriously the problem of negotiating political settlement with the Nagas. The unwillingness of Delhi to acknowledge that a people which had kept up their fight for some 10 years in the jungle had earned any right to decide their own future “of their own volition” rendered the Peace Mission’s efforts futile. Indeed, no talks took place for about nine months of the cease-fire because the Naga federal delegation—the political voice of the Naga underground declined to continue talking with officials who had no power to negotiate. The Government of India accused the Naga Federal army of violating the cease-fire agreement by sending thousands of men for training and to collect arms in East Pakistan. The Nagas counter-accused the Indians of cynically using the cease-fire to consolidate their military posts outside every important village, to build permanent barracks and cantonment outside the Naga capital Kohima, to reconnoitre the underground army’s

camps from the air and on the ground, to improve greatly their military communications, and to construct an enormous new prison.

"It is a certainty that if no generous political proposals are made, and if the terms of a durable peace are not agreed, than another bloodbath in Nagaland is inevitable. Plans exist for the uprooting of all the villages and for re-grouping the population in vast concentration areas, where they would be permanently under guard and dependent for food on the Indian government. These plans would already have been carried out if the Peace Mission had not been called into being in 1964 by the Baptist church to try to find some other solution. If all negotiations break down and the fighting is resumed it may pose very grave problems for India and for her friends. Disaffection could easily spread into the other hill areas of Assam and the North East Frontier Agency."

But the charges of Rev. Michael Scott were repudiated by the Indian High Commission in London as misleading. Dr. J.N. Mehta, the Indian High Commissioner in London replied on 30 May 1968: "In a statement published in *The Times* today, the Rev. Michael Scott, formerly a member of the Peace Mission (set up to resolve the Naga impasse) has threatened a "bloodbath" and "a bell will toll for more than the death of the Naga people" unless a settlement entirely favourable to the Naga hostiles (who form a small section of the Naga people) is made immediately by the Government of India. He has further threatened an extension of the present conflict "to other areas of Assam and the North-East Frontier Agency."

"One is entitled to expect from a pastor of a church, who seeks to present his credentials as a non-partisan conciliator and a member of the Peace Mission, to talk at least the language of peace and conciliation. His present statement confirms the Government of India's fears that as a member of the Nagaland Peace Mission, Rev. Scott has been consistently playing a partisan role. Rev. Scott chooses to ignore facts and is wholly preoccupied with his distorted image of realities. Let those with reputed knowledge of facts testify to the tragic distortion of history which Rev. Scott has perpetrated. Writing in a letter to *The Times* dated 27 January 1965, Messrs. J. H. Hutton and Keith Cattle, with long and intimate experience of Nagaland and the Naga people, described the situation in the following words :

"The question of peace in the Naga Hills seems now to hang in the balance. The truce has been extended to March 6, but so far no settlement has been reached. Since we are among those who were once privileged to share in the administration of that delectable dis-

strict which is now Nagaland, and which seemed in those days to be the happiest district in all India, and the most desirable to serve in, we feel compelled to write to you on the chance that this letter may throw even the last crumb of weight into the scale of peace after many years of the bitterest unrest.

"In Part XVI of the Constitution of India as modified up to March 1963, comprehensive provisions are laid down for the protection of minority tribes, and in Part XXI it is specially provided that no Act of the Indian Parliament shall apply to Nagaland unless the Legislative Assembly of Nagaland so decides. In effect this means that Nagaland is completely independent in all matters except those of foreign relations and external defence.

"Obviously India could go no further than this most generous offer. Nagaland lies along her natural frontier to the north-east, she has been only too recently threatened with invasion. Nor is it easy to conceive how in any other way Naga tribes could thus have the best of two worlds—complete self-government for themselves, as much, or as little administrative isolation from the rest of India as they wish, and the backing of India, of which their country is essentially a geographical entity after all, in the case of aggression from outside. Indeed, the dissidents have gained not only all they could have hoped, but more. To refuse a settlement on such terms would be worse than a blunder, it would be a crime against their own people; for it is they who will suffer most if peace be not now achieved.

"It is interesting to observe the similarity of views expressed by the Rev. Michael Scott and Phizo. On April 13 Phizo wrote a letter, again to *The Times*, under the caption, "The Mizo People". Again, it was left to Hutton to set the record straight. His letter, the text of which we quote below, was published in *The Times* of April 20, 1966:

"The mistaken caption of "The Mizo people," which appears over Phizo's letter (April 13), is not more erroneous than some of his statements. The Naga Hills district of British India was so constituted and its boundaries notified in 1867. Thence forward the boundaries were from time to time reluctantly extended eastwards as found necessary to prevent Naga tribesmen from raiding westwards.

"In 1873 it was decided to assess the administered villages to revenue, and revenue was thenceforward regularly collected at any rate down to 1947. No final boundary to the north-east was ever accepted except that agreed on between India and Burma.

"The civil and criminal control of the Naga Hills was exercised by the Deputy Commissioner appointed by the Governor of Assam. No Naga national assembly, nor anything like one, existed before 1974 nor was there even any common language spoken among the Naga tribes.

"Except in cases of serious crime, which were dealt with under the Indian Penal Code, the Nagas were administered by the Deputy Commissioner, and his assistants according to their own customs which varied from tribe to tribe and even from village to village: but to write of a Naga national assembly with which from 1876 to 1947 the British never interfered is more completely nonsense than I could have expected to read from anyone literate enough to write a letter to you, Sir."

"Rev. Scott's reference to the Simon Commission is misleading. In 1929 some members of a Naga Club, an organization formed in 1918, comprising local government officials and headmen of villages in their memorandum submitted to the Commission, demanded exclusion of the Nagas from the proposed reforms. There was no question of any "independence." Rev. Scott also misinterprets the so-called Naga demand for "independence" under the "10-year agreement" accepted by Sir Akbar Hydari, who was then Governor of Assam. He forgets to mention that it was made clear to the Naga National Council that any new arrangement that might be entered with them subsequently would have to be within the Indian Union. Scott's recourse to retaliating atrocity stories constitutes a regrettable departure from standards of rectitude one might expect from him. The vast majority of the Naga people who enjoy fullest autonomy under existing arrangement, want no part of the campaign of violence or vilification launched by the Naga hostiles and their friends and advocates overseas.

"If Rev. Michael Scott is interested in quenching the flames of conflict and not stocking them, he should join his fellow Christians in India in the appeal which they recently issued to the Nagas and the Mizos through the all-India Christian Conference on "Peace with Justice and Charity" organized by all the Christian denominations representing eleven million Christians in India. The conference was held at Bombay on 19 May 1966, and adopted its ad hoc committee's report on Nagaland and the Mizo area urging the Nagas and the Mizos that they had great stake in India and that their development and achievement of their objectives "can be fully accomplished in independent India."

"The ad hoc committee reported that it should be the effort of

all responsible persons among the Nagas and the Mizos as well as in the rest of the country, to bring about this awareness. The report further warned that, "violence and subversion, unfortunately prevalent at present, can lead to no healthy or beneficial results" and that they would do more harm than good to the people of Nagaland and the Mizo area.

"The Government of India would like to restate their position: Nagaland enjoys, today, all the powers and rights common to any other state in India and, in addition, has certain unique and special features guaranteed to it. It is more 'free' and more 'independent' than Assam, Bengal, or Madras. This was ensured, to enable the Naga people to develop themselves according to their own genius, and to ensure them an honoured place as an equal partner in the Union of India, without detriment to their separate racial and cultural entity in any manner.

"It will be pertinent here to state that even when Nagaland was formed into a full-fledged state, the Government of India did not overlook or ignore the special requirements of any particular section of the population who might not have due to historical reasons, attained the same stage of development as others. For example, special provisions were made with regard to Tuensang, in accordance with the expressed wishes of the people of Tuensang, and adequate safeguards were provided to enable Tuensang to develop rapidly and share the benefits of full statehood. This goes to show the abiding interest that the Government of India has in the welfare and development of all people in this frontier state.

"Article 371-A of the Constitution lays down that no Act of the Indian Parliament will apply to Nagaland in respect of (i) religious or social practices of the Nagas; (ii) Naga customary law and procedure; (iii) administration of civil and criminal justice involving decisions according to Naga customary law; (iv) ownership and transfer of land and resources. In other words, the Nagas have been guaranteed the right to have their own civil and criminal administration, in the manner and on the pattern they themselves may desire. They have been guaranteed non-interference not only with their land, but also with all its resources, which can include minerals and mines. Thus, in two main fields, namely, economic and political, the Nagas have been guaranteed autonomy and freedom of an order not known in the other states of India."

The Assam Chief Minister, Chaliha also announced his decision to resign from the Peace Mission and asked its sponsors—the Nagaland Baptist church council to dissolve it. Explaining the reasons for

his resignation in a statement, he greatly appreciated the fact that the underground leaders having come to the negotiating table, had disowned it and condemned the accidents for which he regretted that they had failed to restrain their armed wing which had allegedly committed these subversive acts.

With the Peace Mission beating a premature retreat after blunting the edges of conflict, hopes of persuading the rebel Nagas and the Government of India to come down from their rigid positions and thrash out a solution of the long-standing conflict were razed to ground. Thus, it proved a disappointment to all who actively participated in it. But what Peace Mission contributed notably to the problem is that the viewpoints of the two parties were brought clearly to the surface, the recurrence of violent fighting prevented to a certain extent and armed confrontation reduced. Looking at in another wider context, it enabled certain vital assistance to the Government in maintaining the integrity of India as the core of the rebel forces was broken in the cease-fire atmosphere. Afterwards, on 10 May 1966 the Baptist church council proposed the appointment of a new peace mission to be constituted of Nabakrashna Choudhary, former Chief Minister of Orissa (1950-56), Mrs. Lakshmi Menon, former Minister of External Affairs, Mayagnokcha, former Principal of Mokokchung College, Nukha and Vizol. But Vishnu Sahay, the Governor of Assam and Nagaland saw it with a lack of enthusiasm and the nominated members also expressed no acceptance of their assignment as they knew that they were at a grave disadvantage in taking on the problem and could not fare better only after every competent one else had failed and the underground Nagaland government kept mum about it. Under all these circumstances, the ephemeral Peace Mission which had once prospered at the sweet will of the Government of India and underground Nagas died unwept, unhonoured and unsung, when it failed in its efforts of producing a compromise solution acceptable to the parties concerned.

THE CEASE-FIRE AGREEMENT

However, improvised and fumbling it may be, on 25 May 1964 the draft agreement for suspension of operations or cease-fire proposed by the Peace Mission was signed by three members of the Peace Mission and the five rebel leaders namely Zashei Huire, Biseto Medom, Rokiye Swu, Seletsu Seyetsu and Khruzhalie, on behalf of the Federal government of Nagaland at Sakrabame village in Nagaland. First, according to the agreement, on the

understanding that the terms communicated to the rebels by the Peace Mission would bind the Federal government of Nagaland and the Government of India as well, with whom the negotiations for a lasting settlement would take place, and it was agreed to suspend all forms of hostilities such as sniping, ambushing, imposition of fines, kidnapping, forcible recruitment, sabotage activities and firing and raiding at security posts, towns and administrative centres whereas to the security forces of India would undertake to suspend jungle operations, raiding of Federal army and their administrative camps, patrolling beyond 1,000 yards of security posts, searching of villages, aerial action, arrests, imposition of political fines and forced labour. Moreover, the representatives of the rebel Naga government and its troops would move freely and hold necessary consultations with the people, refrain from moving with arms and uniforms in towns, villages and security posts within a radius of 1000 yards. The proposed period of cease-fire would be from a date to be decided for an initial period of a month, after allowing fifteen days for all concerned to be informed of the terms and conditions of the agreement.

Second, the agreement would cover all the areas inhabited by the Naga people particularly in Mao, Tamenglong and Ukhrul sub-divisions of Manipur.

Third, during the truce period, protection of convoys, columns, administrative centres, international border posts and towns would continue as before although road protection should cease to operate, in order to avoid the possibility of clashes; the Indian forces would not patrol the Burmese frontier area as long as the rebels would give an assurance that no arms would be imported from abroad during the period of the peace talks. In addition, the rebels would co-operate to prevent any violation of the frontier during the cease-fire. Fourth, the rebels also accepted not to press their demand for the presence of the team of international observers during the early stages of the peace talks, as the Central government had agreed the principle of an impartial witness by including Rev. Scott in the Peace Mission. Finally, the truce concluded: "We, the members of the Peace Mission, undertake to forward the above agreement to the Government of India and to do all in our power to ensure its faithful fulfilment by both sides."

Eventually, an order was issued by the Naga Federal government in which it was stated that the "representatives of Federal government of Nagaland have been engaged in talks with members of the Peace Mission appointed by the Nagaland Baptist church council. As a

result of these talks, the representatives have agreed to the conditions under which a cease-fire can be arranged to enable direct talks to take place between the leaders of the Federal government of Nagaland and the Government of India. It is the hope and prayer of members of Federal government and Naga army that this cease-fire will lead to a new era of peace and friendship between the people of Nagaland and the people of India, an era in which Naga people will again be able to engage in their normal peaceful occupations. We call upon all people of goodwill in Nagaland and in India as well as those concerned in the world outside to support this effort to achieve peace in all ways that are open to them."

The Government of India announced its acceptance of the draft agreement on 25 June 1964 subject to the following reservations: "There could be no question of recognition, even by implication, of the Federal government of Nagaland; the Nagaland government must be included in the peace talks; and patrolling of the international frontier must continue."

At a meeting with the rebel leaders on 7 July 1964, B.P. Chaliha proposed that the peace talks should open at Kohima on July 20, and that rebels should send four representatives who would be given with safe conduct passes by the Nagaland government. Rebel leaders, however, rejected the Indian government's reservations and refused to accept passes issued by the Nagaland government, which they branded as a "puppet" body.

After further negotiations, the Nagaland government announced on 28 July 1964 that substantial agreement had been reached on the issues in dispute; the rebel leaders also had agreed to take part in talks with the Chief Minister of Nagaland, on condition that he was not described as such, and to accept safe conduct passes issued by the GOC, the Indian forces in Nagaland. The negotiations, however, suffered a temporary setback on August 1, when mortars, described to be the work of an extremist faction among rebels, were fired on at Kohima, and the Indian soldiers returned the fire.

The members of the Peace Mission returned to Kohima on 11 August 1964 with a message from the rebel leaders, stating that they were prepared to sign a modified cease-fire agreement and to take part in a peace conference at Kohima. Rev. Scott accompanied by church leaders carrying a letter containing the terms of agreement by the Government from Vishnu Sahay, the Governor of Assam and Nagaland, flew by helicopter on August 17, to Yareba village about 40 miles from Kohima for a further meeting with the rebel leaders who accepted the Government's proposal that the cease-fire

should come into effect at midnight on September 5, and the three weeks' interim period was intended to enable both sides to contact their scattered forces, operating in small units in difficult areas.

In spite of the criticisms of the proposed cease-fire agreement as an affront to national dignity, for it remotely suggested the acceptance of the authority of the so-called Federal government as a sovereign government and the trespass of the *de jure* Nagaland government. Now the Government of India agreed to observe the suspension of operations in a letter dated 14 August 1964 written by Assam Governor, Vishnu Sahay to the Peace Mission at Kohima. The text of the letter which contains the final agreement between the Government of India and the Naga Federal government is reproduced below :

"1. The Government of India welcome the steps intended to bring about peace in Nagaland and with this object in view, as already stated, they will depute representatives, whom will be associated with the representatives of the Government of Nagaland, to take part in talks with leaders of the underground. To facilitate these talks and taking note of the letter of 10 August 1964 referred to above, it has been ordered that with effect from 6 September 1964 and for a period thereafter of one month at present, the security forces will not undertake: (a) jungle operations; (b) raiding of camps of the underground; (c) patrolling beyond one thousand yards of security posts; (d) searching of villages; (e) aerial action; (f) arrests; and (g) imposition of labour by way of punishment. During this period fines connected with allegations of complicity with underground activities will not be imposed.

"2. (a) Operations will be suspended as above on the understanding that the underground have accepted that during this period they will refrain from (i) sniping and ambushing; (ii) imposition of fines; (iii) kidnapping and recruiting; (iv) sabotage activities; (v) raiding and firing on security posts, towns and administrative centres; and (vi) moving with arms or in uniform in towns, villages and administrative centres, wherever there are security posts and approaching within one thousand yards of security posts. (b) The assurance, continued in Para 5 of the letter of 10 August 1964 is noted that during this period, the underground will refrain from moving with arms or in uniform in towns and the villages and within a radius of one thousand yards of security posts. The understanding is confirmed that special arrangements may be made in cases where movement with arms or in uniform becomes necessary in any area where there may be risk of encounter with security forces e.g. along

or across roads or bridges.

"3. The arrangements specified above are calculated to preclude any unexpected encounter but in the event of an encounter coming about, both sides will during the period of stoppage of operations observe the rule 'No firing unless first fired on'.

"4. The assurance is noted that, during the period of stoppage of operations, in order to promote an atmosphere conducive to peaceful occupations and free discussion there will be no parading with arms in inhabited areas where security forces will not be present under this agreement.

"5. I note that it has been agreed that on the international border, security forces will maintain patrolling to a depth of three miles as the crow flies from the frontier and that arrangements will be made for modification of the zone when the stoppage of operations is effected. For practical considerations, I request that as suggested in your letter of August 12, arrangements may be made for reconsideration of the depth of this zone at a very early date.

"6. The assurance is noted that no arms will be imported from abroad by the underground during the period of stoppage of operations.

"7. During the period of stoppage of operations the Government of India will continue the protection of army convoys on maintenance service and the usual road patrolling on either side of the road will continue. The road patrols will withdraw when the last convoy of the day has passed. The underground may move about freely on the roads when the convoy has passed the locality and also on non-convoy days. The days of the week and the particular routes used by the convoys will be notified in advance and communicated to the underground leaders as far as may be practicable. It may be necessary to have emergency convoys for such purposes as evacuation of sick and wounded personnel. It may not be possible to give prior information of these convoys. For such convoys however there will be no road protection parties. They will move self-contained for protection. It is noted that the depth of patrolling on either side of the road will be one hundred yards. This is accepted for the present but 100 yards is for practical reasons inadequate and I would therefore ask that this matter also should be kept open for reconsideration at an early date."

The cease-fire which was a major justification of Indian Government's conciliatory policy and perseverance towards the Nagas came into force from the midnight of 5 September 1964 for an initial period of one month after which it had been extended from

time to time till August 1972. Fighting and operations by both the Government and the underground were suspended. Night curfew from gorgeous sunset to sunrise was relaxed. At the August midnight, church bells rang; singing hymns were aloud and the Naga people throwing themselves into ecstasies over the truce conducted the effusive thanks-giving prayers solemnly in all churches in Nagaland, for the mercy and guide of God, bidding goodbye to the nemesis of war. The rebels, who held off in the jungles for long years rejoined their people in love, joy and tears. Thus the whole atmosphere itself was in raptures. In a message of good wishes to the people of Nagaland, Dr. Radhakrishnan, the President of India, said that the day would, "mark the beginning of an era of firm reconciliation and that the Nagas would be able to devote themselves to the development of their state". In another message, the Prime Minister, Lal Bahadur Shastri, promised the Nagas "the fullest opportunity for self-government" and said that he hoped, "a practical solution may evolve from the talks which would undoubtedly bring real happiness and solace to the people of Nagaland". Further he also expressed his gratitude to the members of the Peace Mission for valiant and humanitarian works to bring about peace in Nagaland.

Shilu, the Nagaland Chief Minister gave forth in a festive public meeting organized by the Peace Mission on 6 September 1964 in exultation of the cease-fire, that in order to give maximum facilities for peace talks and to afford freedom of movement to all people, all notifications issued under the Nagaland security regulations would revoke with immediate effect; Kohima and Mokokchung districts would no longer be treated as "disturbed areas"; and the permit and gate system would be lifted; all cases pending under the Nagaland security regulation would be withdrawn; all persons under trial were being released; special powers of the armed forces and the Nagaland security regulation had to cease to operate. He further added, "Today I, on behalf of the Government of Nagaland, extend a warm welcome back home to our Naga brothers, the underground, so that there may be a free exchange of views among ourselves in coming to a definite decision to end this trouble once and for all, as desired by the people of Nagaland". Addressing the same public meeting, Kevichusa, the leader of the Democratic Party, said: "My request to the underground leaders is that they be guided by the highest ideals of practical statesmanship bearing in mind that it is not for anybody's personal interests that negotiations will be entered into, but for the happiness of all people. In making a fresh start, let us see that good use is made of the experience gained, as well as of

the developments which have taken place. When two parties come for a settlement, they must come in a spirit of give and take."

Thus, for the first time in some years, peace returned to the Nagaland, bringing an end to a sad, cruel and lingering little war as cruel in its division of the Nagas among themselves as in the fighting between the rebels and the Indian government army.

Although the peace was previously marred by several serious incidents, including the killing of 15 persons and the wounding of 67 others by the hostile Nagas on 16 August 1964 the killing of another on the day following, and the blowing up by the terrorists of a suspension bridge on the Mokokchung-Wokha road on August 31, no incident was reported after the promulgation of the cease-fire. However, beneath the rejoicings a note of deep anxiety soon made itself come up. A political settlement was still to cross a difficult path in the series of parleys between the Government of India and the Naga Federal government.

PRELIMINARY TALKS

After the cease-fire came into force, the Peace Mission governed solely by the interests of the parties went into action and political negotiations opened between the officials of Government of India and the leaders of Federal government of Nagaland in fine fettle on 23 September 1964 in a bid to search out a lasting political settlement of the Naga problem with prayers, hymns for God's succour and welcome speeches. The Indian government delegation was composed of Y. D. Gundevia, Secretary to the Ministry of External Affairs, Shilu, the Chief Minister of Nagaland, N. C. Santok, Deputy Secretary, Ministry of External Affairs, and U. N. Sharma, Chief Secretary to the Nagaland government, whilst the rebel Naga delegates were Zashei Huire, a Chakhesang patriot and Governor of Japfu state, Thinusillie, Brigadier-General and Issac Swu, Foreign Minister of the Federal government, J. P. Narayan and Rev. Scott also attended the get-together as observers. Rev. Longri, the church leader appealed for a patient and reasonable approach to the issues at stake.

Welcoming the rebels at the talks, Gundevia made it clear that any political settlement of the Naga problem should be within the Indian Union. The rebel Naga delegation headed by Zashei Huire also declared that his delegation too desired to utilise the occasion in the best possible way to approach the problem in a realistic manner in order to find out a lasting solution to the vexed issue. He added all along that Nagaland and India were two separate state

and hoped that the meeting would ease tensions between the two countries, contributing to the lessening of the explosive situation in the South-East Asia. However, before actual deliberations could start, a crisis arose, first, when the rebel Naga delegation objected hard-boiled to the presence of Shilu as the Chief Minister of Nagaland at the conference table, since the Federal government did not recognize the State government, and second, when they insisted on the presence of foreign correspondents and foreign representatives at the talks. Gundevia replied pointedly that it was within the rights of the Central government to decide as to who should be the member of the delegation under the agreement. Yet it was resolved through the mediation of Rev. Scott that Shilu should be present as a member of the delegation and not in the capacity of his being the Chief Minister of Nagaland state. Gundevia rejected the other demand of the underground straightway, plainly telling them that, "We need not make an issue of it, but put the record right by telling the Peace Mission that while agreeing to the talks, we do not recognise the status of the Naga Federal government".

The conference was adjourned till 24 September 1964, which could not be held since the underground delegation unilaterally procrastinated the date *sine die* for the talks. After the conference, the Naga delegates met reporters and distributed them a pamphlet and a cyclostyled letter of the President of the Naga Federal government written on April 15, to the Rev. Scott in which he stated that, "We suffer beyond measure, but we will never join the Republic of India." Then they told them that Federal Nagaland wanted to establish good neighbourly relations with India and hoped that once peace was resolved, and India withdrew from Nagaland, all the problems would have been solved. This was the first impression of the meeting that the Naga delegation gave out as if two belligerent nations were having talks.

The two delegations of the Central government and the underground Nagaland and three members of the Peace Mission met on 1 October 1964 in a cordial atmosphere after a gaining time. Gundevia demonstrated upon the Nagas the impropriety of unilateral postponement or change of the date of the meeting. However, elucidating the friendly approach of the Government, he said: "The Government of India is anxious that peace prevails in Nagaland and that nothing should be done on either side that could endanger or in any manner sabotage this tranquility and peace in Nagaland." Besides, he explained how freedom was ensured to the citizens by the Constitution, how special concessions were given to the tribals to

rise up equal with other advanced citizens of the country, and how Nagaland state was created to meet the aspirations of the Naga people. Speaking after him, the rebel leader, Issac Swu pointed out how both the Nagas and Indians had suffered during the last few years of conflicts and expressed the hope that the talks would bring about a final settlement. The talks were then adjourned.

On 10 October 1964 Gundeia had detailed discussions with the Naga delegation for three hours, and made ready concrete proposals for speedy negotiations of the problem. But the rebel Nagas still struck a discordant note when one of their leaders, Zashei Huire declared that the underground leaders would in no case recognize the Government of Nagaland state.

In the preliminary round of talks, which was held on October 12-13, Zashei Huire harping on the same old tune in tenacity proposed that all concentration camps should be closed in order to bring a workable atmosphere, all the Naga political prisoners released, and the Indian armed forces withdrawn from Nagaland. He reiterated the complete sovereignty as the ultimate goal of the Nagas. In reply, Gundeia denied that there were any concentration camps in Nagaland and stated that the question of the release of prisoners would be taken up when a political settlement was arrived at. Another proposal was put forth by J.P. Narayan, on behalf of the Peace Mission that the underground Nagas should supply a full list of their arms and ammunition to be deposited in a safe custody, that the Indian army should then cease only to be responsible for law and order in Nagaland and for the external defence against possible aggression from across the international frontiers, and that both sides should renounce the use of force to achieve a settlement. Both the delegations then pledged themselves to abjure violence and armament and to agree the Peace Mission's proposals designed to disband the Federal army and the withdrawal of Indian security forces from Nagaland which would be referred to the Union government and the Federal government for consideration.

In a letter handed over to Gundeia on 6 November 1964 after the talks had been adjourned, the Naga delegation reaffirmed the underground's claim for complete independence, rejecting India's contention that Nagaland became a part of India with the transfer of power in 1947, maintained that Nagaland had never been conquered by an Indian army or ruled by an Indian government, and demanded that if India refused to accept Naga independence, the dispute should be referred to the International Court of Justice at Hague.

When the third talks were resumed on November 10, the Naga delegation declared that the question of the underground's laying down their arms should be considered only after the Government had withdrawn all its security forces from Nagaland. This demand was rejected by Gundeia, who maintained that the withdrawal of the security forces was possible only if the Naga delegation accepted unconditionally the Peace Mission's proposals. Once again, the Naga delegation offered to surrender their arms but on the condition that an international observer was to be present when they did so; that all political prisoners were released; and that all Indian forces whether concerned with internal or external security were withdrawn from Nagaland and the guarding of the international border left to the underground. Gundeia agreed to refer to the first condition to the Central government but refused to take cognizance of the second before a political settlement was reached; and flatly rejected the third. But, in this meeting, Y.D. Gundeia made a fervent appeal to the insurgent Nagas for goodwill and understanding to the safeguards of their political, social, economic, religious and cultural interests enshrined in the Constitution of India. He stated: "If there is still any apprehension that all these safeguards are not adequate and if it is felt that scope of the rights and powers of their State should be enlarged to include any other matter or they may desire that their participation with the Central government should be regulated in some other manner, there should be no doubt that these can be discussed and a way found satisfactory to all concerned.

"I would like to impress on every right-thinking Naga that their liberty, equality and freedom are assured and will remain assured and any safeguards or provisions they desire for security, better conditions or a fuller and richer life will be duly considered and examined. That is what we are here to tell you what you have got and to know what you want. India wants nothing from Nagaland. India only wants to give. Nagaland has not enough, and cannot be left to itself to perish in the jungle—even if the jungle is so beautiful...You have lived too long in the jungles...you have lived so unnecessarily away from your parents, your wives and your brothers and sisters. We ask you to come back. Your wives want you back. Come back and do something for them...let there be light in the villages, let light come on again in Kohima, not curfew."

Sardar Swaran Singh, the External Affairs Minister described the demand of independence of Nagaland in the Lok Sabha on November 19 as "untenable", but stated that the talks had not broken down.

The fourth round of peace talks was held without any member of the Peace Mission, unlike the previous occasions as scheduled at Chedema on 28 November 1964. During the series of discussions, Gundevia told the underground Nagas that if cease-fire violations such as forcible collection of donations from the villagers and sending groups of their people to seek arms and aid from East Pakistan or other foreign countries as reportedly decided by Tatars (Members of Parliament) on October 20 continued, the whole climate of peace would be spoiled. In such an atmosphere there was a possibility of breakdown of peace talks. He sought certain clarifications relating to the submission of documents on alleged atrocities against hostile Nagas for which the underground leaders said that these documents would be given to the Peace Mission for handing over to the Government team. Gundevia further stated that the Government was examining their statement of November 16, in which they had reiterated the demand for independence but at the same time he made it clear to the underground leaders that any political solution should be found within the framework of the Constitution of India. Zashei Huire, the underground leader, agreed that peace should be maintained with all efforts. The meeting was adjourned indefinitely till sometime in the middle of December.

PEACE MISSION'S PROPOSALS

Under the cease-fire, the representatives of the Government of India and the Federal government of Nagaland held a number of meetings in which they presented their respective viewpoints strongly adhered to, since the beginning of the talks, and the logical result of which was a stalemate that obstructed a settlement of any kind. At this juncture, of course, quite legitimately, the Mission having talked over the problem, worked out patiently and impeccably and brought out on 20 December 1964, its own initiative proposals for a just and fair compromise settlement of the problem. These proposals were substantially an appeal to the rebel Nagas, to join voluntarily to the Indian Union and, on the other hand, the Government of India to consider ways of meeting the political aspirations and interests of the Nagas to the maximum limit possible. The full text of the proposals signed by the members of the Peace Mission reads as follows:

"1. It has been a matter of considerable satisfaction to the Peace Mission, as to all others in Nagaland and in the rest of India, that since firing ceased on 6 September 1964, for the first time in ten years, people in Nagaland are experiencing what normalcy is. The

Peace Mission feels that if the moral obligation of every one in Nagaland and more so, of the Peace Mission, in whom so much confidence and faith have been reposed, to see that peace becomes everlasting in Nagaland, it is in pursuance of this fact the Peace Mission is addressing this communication to both the parties.

"2. But first it should be placed on record to the honour of both the parties that have been in conflict that the attempt to find peace and agreement to a cease-fire was an adventurous step which issued from their deep desire to find an honourable way to terminate such a bitter, wasteful and protracted conflict.

"3. The marked difference in the atmosphere that prevails in Nagaland today as compared with that prevailing prior to the cessation of operation will probably be only realized by those who have lived or worked in Nagaland where there was fear as soon as darkness began and a sense of insecurity resulting from the ever-present possibility of sudden violence. Today, the people are returning to their normal occupations. Families are being re-united, the biggest harvest for many years has been gathered and there is a feeling of hope in Nagaland which makes every delegate engaged in the peace talks, only too conscious of the heavy burden of decision on those who have to talk it, the life and happiness of so many being dependent on the decisions that are taken. In all this, it is fair to pay tribute not only to the Government of India for their humanity and imagination but also to the leaders of the Baptist church for whom this initiative was the result of much thought and powerful consideration of the good of both India and Nagaland.

"4. The Nagaland peace talks, which started on 23 September 1964, have now come to a stage where the Naga Federal government delegation have placed their demands for consideration by the Government of India. This was in response to the statement of the Government of India delegation at Chiedema on November 14, wherein the Government of India also stated their position and understanding of the problem, as they saw it.

"5. The Nagaland Federal delegation have claimed that the Nagas had never been conquered by the Indian army or ruled by an Indian government, although their territory had been forcibly annexed by the British army and the British government about a century ago. Nevertheless, their right of self-determination, they claim, belonged to them separately as a people from the sovereign independent state of India, and they are now demanding recognition of this independence, which as they say, India herself demanded and heroically struggled for under the historic slogan of *Swaraj*.

"6. The Government of India's position, on the other hand, is that Nagaland formed an integral part of India before 1947 and that with the transfer of power to India by the British parliament, Nagaland became part of India in the same way as all other states in India. At the same time Government of India claim that they have already accepted the need for granting the fullest autonomy to Nagaland by constituting the State of Nagaland, so as to ensure the fullest development of the Nagas and to guarantee their separate ethnic and cultural entity and to ensure their traditional right and their resources accordingly, the Nagas are not ruled by any alien power but are ruling themselves.

"7. The Peace Mission notes that a section of the Naga people accepted the status of statehood thus conferred upon Nagaland as being in their best interest. Another section did not consider that it satisfied the aims and objectives they had been fighting for. Thus there are two divergent positions of the Government of India and the Naga Federal government confronting each other.

"8. Though the two positions appear to be far apart, the Peace Mission believes that, with goodwill and understanding on both sides a solution acceptable to both can be found.

"9. As earlier stated, the Peace Mission reiterates that it is under an inescapable moral obligation to ensure maintenance of peace and settlement of all outstanding problems through peaceful means. The Peace Mission believes that there is no human problem that cannot be solved by peaceful means. The Peace Mission further believes that the Governments concerned and the people concerned share and subscribe to this view.

"10. While the Peace Mission fully agrees and endorses the principle that all subject peoples have the right to self-determination and that no group of people is competent to rule over another, it also has to invite the attention of the Nagaland Federal government to certain historical processes that had taken place to give birth to the Union of India and to the emergence of the great concepts and ideals underlying the Union Constitution.

"11. The British had conquered at several stages and in diverse manner, various parts of the Indian sub-continent, comprising different ethnic groups, political systems and religious beliefs. However, under the aegis of the Indian National Congress and since 1920, under the leadership of Mahatma Gandhi, these various different peoples, representing diverse linguistic, cultural, ethnic and religious elements, came together against foreign colonial rule and developed a consciousness of nationhood. Unfortunately, this common struggle

against foreign imperialism, that had welded these diverse peoples in the Indian sub-continent into one nation did not somehow have an appreciable impact on the Nagas. This was no doubt due to the policy of isolation and exclusion, steadfastly practised by British rulers who believed in creating pockets contrary to each other and hoping to rule in perpetuity by dividing the peoples. In any case, this great national movement of unification which freed India including Nagaland from the yoke of foreign rule did not bring within its embracing sweep the Naga population to the same extent as it did the other parts of the sub-continent. Thus, in 1947 when all the diverse peoples of India who had been brought under British rule, voluntarily agreed to form the Union of India and to share in the common endeavour to ensure that in this great Union the ideals of fraternity, liberty, justice and equality, as enshrined in the Constitution are 'fully achieved,' for the common benefit of all, the same response and sense of participation was not noticeable in the Naga areas.

"12. The Peace Mission, in the circumstances appreciates and understands the desire of the Nagas for self-determination and their urge to preserve their integrity. The Peace Mission also appreciates the courage and tenacity, displayed by the Naga people in their endeavour to achieve this goal. The objectives which they have placed before themselves in their memorandum "Naga Peace Declaration," dated the 17 December 1964, and addressed to the Peace Mission, namely their desire to find peace, their resolve to maintain their integrity and to resist entanglement in war, are all extremely laudable and should commend themselves to all peace-loving people. It is, however, to be noted that this declaration in itself does not resolve the political issue. Therefore, some appropriate meeting point has to be found, where the aims and ideals of the Naga Federal government can be achieved, at the same time, making it possible for the Government of India to accept these within the framework of the political settlement to be mutually agreed upon.

"13. The Peace Mission in the pursuit of a settlement through peaceful means, to which the Government of India as well as the Naga Federal government equally subscribe, would like both the Government of India and the Naga Federal government to consider seriously whether such a meeting point could not be reached. On the one hand, the Naga Federal government could on their own volition, decide, to be a participant in the Union of India and mutually settle the terms and conditions for that purpose. On the other hand, the Government of India, could consider to what extent the pattern

and structure of the relationship between Nagaland and the Government of India should be adapted and recast, so as to satisfy the political aspirations of all sections of Naga opinion and to make it possible for the ideals of peace as expressed in the Naga Peace Declaration to be substantially realized.

"14. The Peace Mission should like, in all earnestness, to impress upon both sides that the approach, herein suggested, is not only the fairest, but the only practical one in the given circumstances; and it fervently hopes that it will commend itself to the Government of India as well as to the Naga Federal government.

"15. The Peace Mission reiterates that the peace now obtaining in Nagaland should be made everlasting. With this object in view, the Peace Mission offered certain suggestions, whereupon both the parties had unequivocally affirmed and declared that they would renounce war and violence as a means for political settlement. This declaration of renunciation of war and use of armed force, it is earnestly emphasised, must not be deviated from by any means. The Peace Mission's proposal, following this bilateral declaration of renunciation of war, to deposit all underground arms in safe custody and to withdraw all Indian security forces from law and order duties could not unfortunately be implemented.

"16. Nevertheless, the Peace Mission would earnestly desire that, in faithful pursuance of the declaration of renunciation of use of of armed forces, both parties take concrete steps to remove all frictions. There have been numerous complaints and counter-complaints from both. The Peace Mission would suggest that the Naga Federal government require all arms issued to its forces to be concentrated at one or several places, in their armouries and under their custody, so there can be basis for any future complaint of their forces parading with arms or extorting money or supplies under threat. They should also seriously ask themselves whether further recruitment and movement of underground towards Pakistan does not create an impression that these are only acts preparatory towards resumption of hostilities and, if so, they should take remedial measure by putting a stop to such recruitment and movement. The Government of India should ensure that its security forces and the civil administration do continue to abide strictly with the terms of the agreement, both in spirit and letter.

"17. The Peace Mission makes a fervent appeal for consideration of the suggestions contained in this paper and for all action that is possible for the maintenance of peace."

Apart from these proposals, J.P. Narayan suggested the "Puerto Rico formula"¹ for Nagaland. But on the whole, the Mission's proposals based on the stark reality of the things as obtaining in Nagaland and emanating from a sincere desire to satisfy Naga urge, were welcomed by the Baptist church leaders, the Nagaland Legislative Assembly, the Democratic Party and all sections of the Nagas.

It was decided to hold the next round of talks on 21 January 1965. This time again, the underground delegation unilaterally changed the venue of the meeting from Chedema to Kensa near Mokokchung which the Government delegation naturally objected to. Even the peace talks also could not be held in the absence of the leader of the underground representatives. In the meantime, it was agreed to extend the cease-fire by another one month during which period, the Indian government's reply to the Mission's proposals was delivered to the Peace Mission. It said that, while not accepting the postulates on which the Mission's proposals were based, the Government welcomed the Mission's conclusion that peaceful solution could be found only within the Indian Union and was willing to consider what alterations, if any, were necessary in the present autonomy of the State of Nagaland to satisfy fully the aspirations of all sections of Naga opinion.

The Naga delegation also sent its reply to the Peace Mission's proposals on 6 February 1965, which said that the Nagas had every right to decide their future and a plebiscite, under the supervision of a neutral body, to decide whether they wanted to remain in India or the independence should be held. It further stated, "If India respects the rights of the Nagas, the Nagas are prepared to enter into any kind of relationship with India which will make them good neighbours."

When further talks were held on 24 February 1965 at Khensa, both delegations announced their acceptance of the Peace Mission's proposals as a basis for a settlement, although difference reportedly rose over their interpretation. The Peace Mission as a whole pointed out that the Naga's contention for the principle of self-determination and the demand of a plebiscite could not be acceptable. Rather, the Mission called upon the rebel Nagas first to accept their proposal for a settlement by voluntarily joining the Union of India and then negotiating the terms of their mutual relationship in a spirit of good-

¹ Puerto Rico, an island with an area of 3,435 sq. miles and 2,683,932 (1970) population was ceded by Spain to the U.S.A. in 1898. Here, U.S. taxation laws do not apply to it but Washington has residual powers in matters such as foreign affairs, defence and control of narcotics.

will and accommodation. Upon this, the Naga delegation asked the Peace Mission to meet the Tatar Hoho and explain its proposals to them. Another proposals by the Peace Mission for the formation of a cease-fire observation committee was also discussed; a suggestion made by the Naga delegation that half the committee members should come from outside India was rejected by the Indian government delegation, and it was finally agreed that it should consist of six Indian citizens. The cease-fire was again extended for a month to April 6.

On 25 March 1965 the Peace Mission met thirty Tatars (Members of Underground Parliament) and about 300 Nagas. At this meeting Rev. Scott dilated upon the Nagas' right of self-determination and replied that the Naga problem was a political one, when the Nagas asked whether the Peace Mission considered the Nagaland question as a rebellion or just a matter of law and order.

When the two delegations met on 5-6 April 1965, Gundevia gave the required assurance, and an agreement was reached on an extension of the cease-fire on the monthly basis. The Indian government, whilst holding that the choice of the leader of its delegation was entirely its own affair, appointed subsequently Dharma Vira, Union Cabinet Secretary, a senior ICS officer, having a status above that of an Union Deputy Minister in place of Y.D. Gundevia. But no further meetings took place between the underground leaders and Indian government representatives at official level when the Naga leadership insisted that Indian government should be represented at the ministerial level. Rev. Scott commented in a statement on June 6, that, "the Peace Mission's proposals have not really been accepted by either side. Each side has accepted the proposals in terms which make it unacceptable to the other. The Government of India delegation accepted the proposals only on the understanding that Nagaland has been and will always remain a part of the Indian Union. The NFG accepted that part of the proposals which referred to their right to decide on their own volition to be or not to be a participant in the Union of India, but they have asked for a recognition of this right before they proceed to negotiate on the form of participation in the Union. The Government has not yet conceded the Nagas' right to decide of their own volition, although the Government is engaged in negotiations without any surrender having taken place. The really hopeful thing about the situation now is that the cease-fire has been observed for nine months today by both sides, despite complaints by each side. Neither side wants to see any renewal of the fighting. Both sides recognize, as

does the Peace Mission, that all outstanding differences between India and the Nagas can be settled by political means."

The Peace Mission announced on 1 July 1965 that both sides had agreed to a three months' extension of the cease-fire and on October 12 again, it would be extended until November 16, a proposal by the Indian government for a further three months' extension having been rejected by the underground Naga leaders. On the other hand, under the preliminary negotiations the basic issues ran much deeper and had grown more difficult for all concerned and the need to put them at high-level had necessarily arisen.

THE CRUCIAL TALKS

The secretary-level talks in argument and counter-argument the aspects of a game of chess, on their respective points failed to produce any acceptable result and it seemed more likely that a settlement on the ticklish question could be worked out decisively at the Prime Minister level in the last analysis. Mrs. Lakshmi Menon, the Minister of External Affairs announced in the Lok Sabha on 15 November 1965 that the Prime Minister, Lal Bahadur Shastri had agreed to receive an underground Naga delegation without any pre-conditions, but with a tacit understanding that any settlement would be within the framework of the Indian Constitution. To equip L.B. Shastri adequately with the background about the Nagas, Rev. Scott wrote glowingly in a report he sent to him: "A quixotic, paradoxical people, fiercely independent, feared for centuries by travellers as head-hunters and remorseless as avengers of wrongs done to their kith and kin...there is a fierce quality in them which is capable of terrible retaliation for wrongs done to them whether as an individual, family or clan. There is also a streak of cruelty which is part of the texture of their life as it has come to be woven into a pattern out of the hard and harsh raw materials of existence. It is as visibly there as the qualities of gaiety, friendship and generosity, however the preachers may deplore it. It is part of the warp and woof of their life that has grown out of their experience and beliefs about the kind of world they live in, the spirits and human beings and birds and animals which all inhabit it."

The talks were arranged by B.P. Chaliha and were scheduled for 18 January 1966, but could not be held because of the unfortunate death of L.B. Shastri of heart-attack at Tashkent on January 11, where the famous Tashkent declaration was signed, the night before at a Soviet-sponsored meeting bringing semblance of peace after the vicious war that had erupted between India and Pakistan

during August-September, 1965.

Mrs. Indira Gandhi succeeded Shastri as the Prime Minister of India. Indira Priyadarshini, the only child of Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru, born in 1917, the year of the victory of Russian Revolution and of the closing of the First World War, two stupendous events that rocked the world, grew up in an atmosphere, highly charged with political ferment generated by the Indian independence movement. She could not complete her formal education since her father was in and out of the British jail because of his participation in the freedom movement although she was given good schooling by private tutors including the famous poet Rabindranath Tagore at home and through educational tours abroad.¹ She was married to Feroz Gandhi in 1942 and has two sons. She lived mostly with her father who coached her in the affairs of the state, an experience which she put to the management of Indian affairs when stepping in the South Block as the country's Prime Minister in 1966.

Extremely noble at heart and broad in outlook, she had a soft corner for the tribals including Nagas and had evinced a keen interests in their advancement. Now, she took solicitously the splendid opportunity to plumb the depths of the Naga problem and explain to the Nagas the benefits of remaining in India than getting separated from it. The talks were held between her and the Naga delegation headed by Khugato Sukhai, the Federal Naga Prime Minister, a mild and benevolent man in the presence of the members of the Peace Mission on 18-19 February 1966 in New Delhi. The first talks were a "courtesy call," as described by the Naga leaders. It was agreed at their meeting that further talks on the issue should be held in April and the Peace Mission's observers team should be reinforced by two officials of the Indian government as well as two officials of the Naga Federal government to inquire into any incidents and to issue orders to prevent further breaches of the cease-fire.

Mrs. Indira Gandhi promised to accord a sympathetic consideration to the delegation's request for the release of the Naga political prisoners. At this time the question of Nagaland's relationship with India was not discussed, said Mrs. Gandhi in the Lok Sabha on 21 February 1966: "The main subject of our talks was the importance of preserving peace and stopping many ugly incidents which still take place...I was impressed by the sincerity and earnest-

¹ See *Letters from a Father to His Daughter*, Allahabad, 1938; and *Glimpses of the World History*, London, 1939.

ness of the Naga leaders whom I met. They seemed genuinely anxious to ensure implementation of the agreement entered into in September 1964 and to prevent further violent incidents and loss of life. I am not without hope that as a result of the meeting a certain amount of unnecessary distrust and suspicion which had developed on both sides has been dispelled. The Government was making real efforts to change the Naga underground's attitude on the independence question, but this needed great patience and time." Nagaland, she added pungently, "was very definitely apart of Indian Union and our attitude remains as it is". However, Issac Swu told the Press (in February) that nothing short of the Nagaland's sovereignty or self-rule would be acceptable to the Nagas and contended that it was a matter of India's recognising their independence and not granting it.

At the second round of talks held in New Delhi on 9-12 April 1966, Mrs. Indira Gandhi and Naga delegation discussed the political question, while Rev. Michael Scott and B.P. Chaliha discussed with Dharma Vira the steps for the effective observance of the cease-fire. It was agreed that there should be three separate observer terms for Nagaland, Manipur and Assam, and that such teams should consist of representatives of the Government, the Naga underground, and the Peace Mission whose functions were to prevent recurrence of fighting, to contribute to the restoration and maintenance of law and order and to supervise cease-fire, making any attempt to solve the problem. During the talks, "a lot of misunderstanding had been removed, some constructive ideas arose which the underground leaders would now think over and further meeting would take place". A Naga spokesman stated that the "misunderstanding" referred to the violations of cease-fire. Mrs. Indira Gandhi told the Lok Sabha on April 20, that the talks were going on in the right direction although she could not say that they were getting nearer to solution. She appealed to the members not to insist for details at this stage, as it might prejudice the issue.

Following the attacks on a train in November 1965, a series of bomb explosions officially attributed to the extremist Naga hostiles particularly of the Kaito faction took place on the North-East Frontier Railway in Assam in February and April 1966, causing heavy loss of life and property in an attempt to impede the New Delhi talks. The railway track was blown up on February 9 at Dhansiri, near the Nagaland border, but there were no casualties. On February 17, a time bomb exploded in a train at Farkating, killing 37 passengers and injuring over 50; and when the train was searched after the ex-

plosion, a second bomb was also discovered, fused and ready to explode. On April 20, time-bombs exploded in a railway coach at Lumding station, near the Nagaland border, killing 56 people and injuring 127, while three days later 40 people were killed and 61 injured when a similar explosion occurred on a train standing in Diphu station, about 20 miles from Lumding. Dr. Ram Subhag Singh, Minister of State for Railways, stated on April 25 that the explosions at Lumding and Diphu had been caused by a type of plastic bomb not manufactured in India. And this lent support to the assumption that some foreign influence was working behind these outrages.

Mrs. Gandhi told the Lok Sabha again on 25 April 1966 that the sternest measures would be taken against those responsible for the explosions, as soon as something reliable was established after investigations. She said that if it was found that those with whom we were having talks now were responsible for such acts, then obviously the whole approach would have to change. In the ensuing debate, Madhu Limaye, Samayukta Socialist Leader, demanded a thorough revision of the Government policy on dealing with Nagas since the Government had completely failed to deal effectively with the Naga rebellion, which, he asserted, was "fanned continually by foreign missionaries, planters and Pakistan". H. N. Mukerjee, a right-wing Communist, said that tragedy was the symptom of a disease which should be rooted out by a process of understanding and sympathy. There was a deep sense of grievance in the eastern parts of the country, and it was necessary to pursue a policy whereby the border people could live as devoted citizens of India. Frank Anthony, an Anglo-Indian Independent, appealed for "patience to our utmost extent" and said that the Government had shown statesmanship in dealing with the Naga problem. Hem Barua, an Assamese Praja Socialist, alleged that maps and plans for railway sabotage had been found on March 7 in a jeep in which two Ministers of the Federal government were travelling, but that they had been released through Assam Chief Minister Chaliha's intervention. He also alleged that a Naga delegation had recently met the Marshal Chen Yi and Z.A. Bhutto, the Chinese and Pakistani Foreign Ministers respectively in Dacca.

But Y. B. Chavan, India's Minister of Defence, denied all knowledge of the alleged meeting. In reply to questions, G.L. Nanda, Minister of Home Affairs said on April 28 that a document found in the possession of members of the Federal government on March 7 referred to a previous act of sabotage, and did not indicate

any future plan. Two Nagas were named in the document, but they were not the persons wanted for the Lumding and Diphu explosions. Hem Barua, however, alleged on 3 May 1966 that documents containing plans for sabotage, all along the North-East Frontier Railway had been seized on this occasion and returned at B.P. Chaliha's request, and that only photostat copies had been kept.

On the other hand, the Naga Federal government strongly condemned the Lumding and Diphu explosions in telegrams to Mrs. Gandhi and B.P. Chaliha on 26 April 1966 and described as baseless and unfounded the allegation that the Naga underground were responsible for these incidents. A spokesman of the Indian government had previously described the explosion at Farkating on February 17, as an attempt by Naga extremists to wreck the New Delhi talks, and said that it was not certain whether the military wing of the underground was in full agreement with the political wing, which was participating in the talks. Indian Press reports suggested that the explosions were the work either of the military wing or of a dissident faction led by General Kaito, the brother of Khugato and former rebel C-in-C, who had been removed from the post of Defence Minister in the Federal government in 1964 as indis disciplined for his broad views including going to China and criticism of the Peace Mission. It was reported on May 11, that about 1,000 armed Nagas had entered in the Ukhrul area of Manipur, which was covered by the cease-fire. A village in this area was attacked by a large group of rebel Nagas on May 15, and two police camps by about 3,000 hostiles on the night of May 28; in both cases the attackers, who were armed with automatic weapons and machine-guns, were repelled after exchange of fire. In another attack on May 28 when by-elections for four seats of the Nagaland state assembly took place, underground Nagas opened fire on a polling booth at a village, 18 miles from Kohima but fled into the jungle when challenged by the police. Thirty-four security posts in the hill sub-divisions of Ukhrul, Tengnoupal, Churachandpur, Tamenglong and Mao were declared protected areas by the Chief Commissioner of Manipur on May 28, with immediate effect. Thus, both sides were busy laying blame at the other's door for violation of cease-fire and accusing the other of being responsible for the failure to resolve the problem as a result of unreasonable demands.

When the talks were in progress between the Government of India and the underground leaders the military wing of the underground Nagas led by General Mowu and a dissentient faction led by former General Kaito became active, hostile to each other in the

early 1966. Yet the two Naga Generals, however different in their means to the same goal, seemed alarmed at a growing sentiment in favour of a negotiated compromise.

Another factor which dealt a death-blow to the peace talks, was the Mizo armed revolt which broke out simultaneously in several parts of the Mizo Hills district of Assam on 28 February and 1 March 1966, demanding secession of the Mizo Hills to form an independent Mizo state or 'Chinland'¹ comprising Mizo-Chin areas of India, East Pakistan and Burma, where branches of the same stock, speaking closely related dialects of the same language were there. This revolt was spearheaded by the Mizo National Front led by Laldenga. But before it was suppressed by the Indian security forces without much difficulty, the Mizo National Front took over Aizawl, the Mizo headquarters. Then the Mizo-Kukis and the Nagas went to East Pakistan for arms and military training to continue their insurgence against the Government of India till their independence would be given. On March 12, India lodged a strong protest to Pakistan government for providing facilities in its territory for the Mizo-Nagas to commit acts of rebellion and subversion. At the same time, the Armed Forces (Special Powers) Amendment Bill extending the present Act for one year to the whole of Nagaland, was passed by the Rajya Sabha on March 28, having been approved previously by the Lok Sabha.

In spite of all these woe-begone happenings, the Government of India continued the political talks with the Nagas with a view to finding out a solution to the grave tangle of Naga issue. The third round of talks between Mrs. Indira Gandhi and the underground leaders headed by Khugato Sukhai was held in New Delhi on 10-11 August 1966. At very outset, the Naga delegation submitted to Mrs. Gandhi a 14-point memorandum summarising the rebel Nagas' views on the historical background to the Naga problem, as to how the Nagas who were not Indians before the British advent were conquered and brought the British paramountcy and left willy-nilly to India in 1947. To give little more details, the memorandum recalled that after Britain had sent a number of military expeditions into Naga territory, the Nagas had agreed in 1880 that Britain should have military bases in a limited area, which was given the name of the "Naga Hills"; the Nagas had refused, however, to enter into any agreement giving up their sovereignty, and the civil and criminal administration over the people of the Naga Hills had always been

¹ In 1960 the Paite (Kuki) National Council proposed the formation of "Chinland" which would extend from Haflong in Assam to Akyab in Burma.

in the hands of the Nagas themselves; the Naga Hills had been renamed "Naga Hills Excluded Area" in 1937 to make it clear that the area was excluded from British India; in May 1947 the Indian Constituent Assembly had proposed to the Naga National Council that Nagaland should join the Indian Union, and a 10-year agreement had concluded in the following month; Negotiations had subsequently been broken off by India, however, on 14 August 1947, the Nagas had declared the independence of Nagaland, which had been confirmed by a referendum in May 1951; and Nagaland, it was claimed, had therefore always been an independent territory, and would never give up its sovereignty.

Earlier, in a letter of 5 August 1966 to Mrs. Indira Gandhi, Khugato had stated all along : "It would be a wrong logical conclusion to say that Nagaland must be a part of India just because for some time both India and part of Nagaland were under British administration. On the strength of that reasoning there would be similar justification to claim Burma as a part of India, just because Burma too happened at one time to be under the same foreign administration...Yet in this present fast-moving age, no nation or country, big or small, can now dream of having a completely isolated life from its neighbours and the rest of the world. Thus political prudence tells us that it will be of the greatest benefit for both Indians and Nagas that they should have the most friendly relations through understanding for all time to come. Bearing all this in mind, it is our desire to solve the issue with India through peaceful means... In spite of our present conflict we have great regard for you and India's prestige in the international field. Despite all the past bitterness, as the inevitable consequence of the long political conflict ever since 1947, coupled with the cruel consequences of 15 years armed conflict, very dispassionate and serious thought will have to be given to finding the best possible means, through the help of countries friendly both to India and Nagaland for a solution of the problem so that a friendly relationship may be established in the best interests of both countries."

On the other side, Mrs. Indira Gandhi assured the Naga delegation that their legitimate rights would be fully protected, and that they would need to have no apprehension of any interference in their way of life within the Indian Union. She had suggested that the delegation should consult their friends and come at a later date for more detailed discussions. Meanwhile, she warned that peace should be maintained and that no effort should be made by the under-

ground to seek any assistance from outside.¹ Thus the problem was held over until the next meeting.

During this interregnum, the Tatar Hoho (the underground Parliament) was convened in September 1966 which took up an appraisal of the talks at New Delhi. Scato Swu resigned as President of the underground Federal government and was succeeded by Rev. G. Mhiasi, a former Baptist pastor, who had won the British Military Cross in 1944 for helping the Allied forces repulse the Japanese invasion of India.

The fourth round of talks was held between the Prime Minister, Mrs. Indira Gandhi and the Naga leaders on 27-29 October 1966. This time, happily, both the sides relented from their standpoints a little and sanguine of successful hope to the solution of the vexing problem had soared as the negotiators apparently neared towards an agreement. Reaffirming their encored demand for independence, the Naga delegates stated that they wanted to have closest friendship with India. R. Suisa, an eccentric and opinionated Tangkhul member of the delagation, but a friend of Phizo and a former Congress member of Indian parliament from Manipur, proposed that they should give guarantees that their foreign policy should be linked with India's; that such matters as currency should be entrusted to the Indian Union; and that they should undertake the defence of their part of the frontier with the help of a subsidy from the Indian government. Mrs. Indira Gandhi, while maintaining Nagaland as an integral part of India made a significant concession by proposing that it should enjoy complete autonomy, and stated that she was prepared to consider a settlement within the Indian Union which would not necessarily be within the present constitutional framework. At the end of the talks, the Nagas asked for an elucidation of what the Government meant by a "complete autonomy", and how this was to be translated into practice.

Stating in the Rajya Sabha on 8 November 1966, that the Indian government could think only of a settlement "with readjustment of the present status of Nagaland within the Indian Union," Dinesh Singh rejected a suggestion that the talks should be called off until the underground accepted the position that Nagaland was a part of India. At a session of the Tatar Hoho, held on November 7-9, it was decided by Tatars that the talks should continue, but that any offer falling short of sovereignty should be rejected.

At the fifth round of talks, held on 2-5 January 1967, the Prime

¹ The statement of Dinesh Singh, Minister of State for External Affairs in the Lok Sabha on August 18, 1966.

Minister, Mrs. Indira Gandhi tried her best to impress upon the Nagas to consider a different status for Nagaland from that of the statehood. Dinesh Singh also told the Naga delegation that they could have complete autonomy apart from defence, external relations, communications, and currency, to which the Nagas replied that this was incompatible with their claim to independence. At the same time, the Naga delegation expressed their wish to consult Phizo on this offer.

Meanwhile, two fateful events struck rudely on the course of these historic talks. Phizo, the President of the NNC went to New York, ostensibly for medical treatment, but actually to mobilize political support from the United States of America and the UN for Nagaland's independence. There, he contacted the Baptist missionary organisations which had pampered consciously or unconsciously the secessionary elements in Nagaland during the British period. Later, he visited Washington to present Naga case before the State Department officials. Despite Phizo's frantic efforts to woo the Americans, the State Department assured the Government of India that he would not be permitted to carry on any political activities in the USA. Phizo returned from United States with dim hopes, though publicly he maintained that he had introduced the peoples of the highest world forum with the Naga case, who appreciated their aspirations, while in fact he had received only a cool reception everywhere. He met R. Suisa and Tsukru Vizol, a well known Naga ex-airman of the Royal Air Force and educationist, who were sent by the underground leaders apparently to assess his opinion on the Government of India's offer to Nagaland a status greater than the present state. Phizo still kept tenaciously to his demand for an independent sovereign Nagaland but advised the underground government in a letter addressed to Rev. Mhiasiu and Khugato not to break off the talks with the Indian government and to continue the cease-fire as long as Indian forces respected it.

Another dimension was added to the situation by the initiation of the dissentful activities of General Kaito and his men against the underground Federal leadership. His supporters from all tribes mostly Semas, Maos and others inveighed and raided an underground Phizoite army camp and made away with a large sum of money and supplies of arms and ammunition and began preparing to organize their own army government in place of Federal government.

At the 10-11 July 1967 Chedema Conference, General Kaito strongly opposed Phizo's participation in the talks with the Indian government. He demanded that either solution should be brought

out quickly or the Federal government should hand over all powers to an army government headed by himself. Thus, the conference failed to discuss the implications of Phizo's letter. The crisis foretold the imminent clash—armed clash between the two factions, which was luckily averted at the moment by Khugato's conciliatory talks with General Kaito on July 18. But a number of clashes between the Indian security forces and the underground Nagas occurred in the late 1966 and early 1967 in the Ukhrul and Tamenglong subdivisions of Manipur where the Mizos and Kukis also carried on their hostile activities. The entry of the Mizo-Kukis into the Tamenglong areas was, in fact, strongly resented by the underground Nagas as the violation of their territory. Shortly before the Mizos withdrew from the area, a Naga spokesman stated on August 3, that the underground army would shortly go into action against the 'intruders'.

A spokesman of the Federal government said on 25 July 1967 that it would continue the talks with the Government of India and would pay no attention to General Kaito's views.

When the sixth and the final round of talks between the underground leaders and the Indian government opened in New Delhi on 5 October 1967,¹ Mrs. Indira Gandhi made it clear to the delegation that there could be no solution of the Naga problem outside the Indian Union, whilst the Naga delegation reaffirmed the expressed view in their 14-point memorandum, already submitted to her and presented a new memorandum to the Government. The delegation further complained against the violations of cease-fire agreement and rejected the allegation that the Naga underground had instigated the uprising of the Mizos and Kukis and contended that they had been actually armed by the Indian government to fight against the Nagas, but had now turned against the former.

A new memorandum harped again, as stated above on the already familiar contention that Nagaland had at no time been under Indian sovereignty; the British had imposed their sovereignty, but this had been nullified as soon as they left this country. There was no question, it was maintained, of a "rebellion" against New Delhi; the Nagas had fought to regain the independence which they had lost to the British. The Federal government reserved the right to invite Phizo to participate in the talks whenever it thought appropriate, and as he was a citizen of sovereign Nagaland and not of India there was no question of asking for a safe-conduct for him. It also alleged that Indian troops were attacking Naga camps in Manipur in

¹ The meeting was scheduled to be held on October 4, but could not take place when Khugato got suddenly ill with allergic rash breaking out on his body.

violation of the cease-fire agreement.

On 6 October 1967 the talks took place between Dinesh Singh and the Naga delegation. But on the same day, an official of the External Affairs Ministry informed the Naga leaders of Mrs. Indira Gandhi's inability to see them as she was "too busy", preparing to leave for Moscow on October 8. He also asked them to leave the building where they were staying in, as the other visitors were expected and handed them over air tickets for their return journey. Feeling very much piqued and humiliated by the sudden switch of Government's moves, the delegation left New Delhi empty-handed for Nagaland on October 7, although later on the delegation were assured that the gratuitous official's message had been due to a "misunderstanding" and that the Prime Minister would find time to meet them again.¹ However, on the eve of departure, Khugato stated that they would be happy to return for further talks. But Ramyo festered in his mind with the insult asserted that Nagaland was never a part of India and that there could be no solution of the problem within the framework of the Indian Union and, said obviously keeping China in mind: "It is for India to treat us as friends or throw us to the other side."

The hopes for a peaceful and compromise settlement raised by four years of high-level parleys between the Government of India and the Naga leaders and the conviction that reason would prevail in the end were checkmated at the failure of finding a meeting ground on negotiating skills. This was perhaps the most elegiac aspect of the whole affair in the intransigence of the both parties, obviously in miscalculation of the extent to which pressure could be brought on to bear on the other side to make concessions. This grave hitch was allowed to mar the protracted and often seemingly frustrating position. It was the second time that it failed to bring about a solution to the problem which all too may appear in retrospect to have been maladroit and fumble after the first was that of the Akbar Hydari agreement, that a solution appeared a fighting chance in sight, yet proved elusive and had slipped out of hands at the eleventh hour when the rebel leaders had come to New Delhi with a definite desire of the negotiations to be very serious and to accept a solution which would entail such set-up as greater than the present state or the Sikkim type, while keeping up the tempo of Naga independence demand. As likely as not, this judgment and aim based on surmise fooled itself. Had the Nagaland state government acted honestly and accounted for the Government of the innate psychology

¹ See *Keesing's Contemporary Archives*, London, March 29-April 5, 1969, p. 23272.

and character of the Naga people who would seldom accept a solution or an offer, without repeated requests, and persuasions, the problem could have been solved and would erase the past wounds from the contemporary political lexicon and a new era of happy friendship between the Nagas and the Government may have ushered into the best interests of people concerned. Anyway, the fate of solution ebbed away and once again carried the Nagas away to the waves of uncertainty and unknown circumstances with a living memory, and even a legacy of the political talks at New Delhi.

The price of the failure of the political talks on the heartpeice of the question of sovereignty led high to major changes in the Naga Federal leadership and search for aid from foreign countries for their independence and freedom was initiated with renewed vigour. A session of Tatar Hoho which was convened on 12 October 1967 decided to adopt a presidential form of government. Khugato was accused of failure in achieving any political gains despite prolonged negotiations and of abetting his brother, former General Kaito to undertake traitor-like activities. In view of heated criticism, Khugato resigned from the Prime Ministership of the Federal government on October 23. Soon after, on October 26, Rev. Mhiasi suspended Khugato's parliamentary government and the Tatar Hoho, to assumed himself the supreme executive powers and appointed a consultative committee of five persons including Khugato to assist him in the formulation of policy. This change momentarily strengthened the position of the Phizoites.

On the other side, the Government of India reversed to its former contention that the settlement of the Naga problem had been reached in 1960, and that there was no scope for further talks. Mrs. Indira Gandhi told the Lok Sabha on 24 July 1968 that the Indian government had no intention of resuming the peace negotiations at the moment, because of repeated violations of the cease-fire agreement by the underground Nagas. Rejecting such inchoate suggestions that the cease-fire agreement should be extended for some years or that it should not be extended at all, she maintained that decision on this subject depended on conditions obtaining in the area. Yet the Nagas also remained implacably committed to their contention of a sovereign Nagaland, come what may. When their efforts to get UN interested in their case got a hot rebuff, the Nagas went to communist China for arms and military training and political support.

The underground Naga leaders discussed in the two meetings they held in the second half of May 1968 and early in June, whether the

¹ Dinesh Singh's statement in the Lok Sabha, February 19, 1968.

presidential form of government should be abandoned after all. At the second meeting a proposal by Khugato that parliamentary government should be restored was defeated by 16 votes to 15, but it was agreed to set up a committee to consider the question. The Committee was reported on July 6 to have decided that what form the government should have largely depended on the conditions obtaining in the area.

Earlier, at a joint conference of the representatives of the Nagaland state government, the Underground, and the Peace Observers' team took place at Dimapur on 20 April 1968. Both the sides reaffirmed that they would honour the terms of the cease-fire agreement. The representatives of the state government sought to raise the question of the import of arms from abroad. However, the underground Naga delegation contended that this matter too was covered by their assurance as the import of arms also was forbidden by the agreement, and refused to discuss the issue further. At the underground's request it was agreed that the Peace Observers' team should raise with the Indian authorities the question of the establishment of a peace centre for those areas of Manipur covered by cease-fire and of the restoration of the *status quo* in these areas.

Dr. M. Aram, the Convener of the Peace Observers' team, said in a statement on 21 April 1968 that the underground Naga delegation had made it clear that they would not send their troops abroad for arms and training in contravention of the truce. This statement was described as "totally incorrect, false and mischievous" by Zashei Huire, leader of the underground delegation, who contended that there was no clause in the cease-fire agreement to prevent the Nagas from going abroad, although it did forbid the import of arms. Despite the increased number of incidents between the Government security forces and the underground, the cease-fire continued to be extended from month to month.

Soon after, an all-party conference, under the sponsorship of the Nagaland government and the Baptist church council was held at Kohima on 22-24 August 1968 and was attended by the representatives of the State government, Khugato and other underground leaders, General Kaito's followers and church leaders, to find out the democratic ways so that the talks could get going again. The conference appointed a seven-member committee to explore common ground to form a basis for renewed negotiations. P. Vamuzo, a member of this committee, visited New Delhi in the first week of October to persuade the Indian government to resume the peace negotiations. He was informed by the External Affairs Ministry that

the only representative of the Naga people that the Central government recognised was that of the State government and when the latter received him and his proposals, the Central government would proceed and reciprocate in a befitting manner. Despite this snub, the whole committee came to New Delhi on October 22. T.N. Kaul, Secretary in the External Affairs Ministry informed them on October 26, that talks could be resumed only after the underground had stopped sending their men to China and accepted that Nagaland should remain in India. The Committee in a statement on October 30 declared that "by not talking to the Naga National Council and the representatives of the Naga people, we have no doubt that the Government of India will inadvertently push the opposite party to look for outside help, and that is precisely what we are trying to avoid." After this, no tangible steps for peaceful negotiations between the India government and the underground Nagas took place. Meanwhile a new political party—the United Front of Nagaland—had been formed on July 17, with the object of participating in the elections to the Nagaland state assembly in 1969 and initiating political means for a peaceful settlement of the Naga problem through negotiations. Most of its members belonged to the Democratic Party, the former leader of which, Kevichusa, became President of the new organisation. But the party's labours to settle the problem yielded no fruit at a time while the Nagas kept tearing themselves apart without the spirit of unity, reconciliation and forgiveness, by the destructive power conflict among the leaders that never had before been imagined.

Rebel Nagas in Foreign Countries

Su shoi-a-Pukeni, you have gone to Losa-a,
Your wife and children wait at Tikhre-a-Khru;
Pukeni morosely replied:
Tell them not to droop or cry,
but wait; I shall bring golden necklaces or things...
—A Naga Folk-song

Since the Nagas tenaciously conceived themselves as a different people from the Hindus and Muslims, they conjured up the idea of exclusive political being and a parochial existence in the shape of a sovereign state of their own people—Nagaland—which the British government had turned down as unviable as also against the interests of the Empire on the eve of their departure even if they were ethnically a different race. In the beginning the Nagas were clamouring, whatever be in a fool's paradise, for independence in the hope that the leaders of India particularly Mahatma Gandhi and Jawaharlal Nehru, who had opposed imperialism and colonialism in any form in Africa, Asia, South America, Europe would certainly approach the Naga problem from that angle of catholic thought in order to set a magnanimous example by granting Nagaland sovereignty which the Nagas had been most passionately asking for. They fondly entertained this idea quite indifferent to the fact that the British had left Nagaland to India as a part and parcel of it, and it was not what imperialism implied in this context from the Indian point of view as Pandit Nehru used to say repeatedly that India's freedom was Naga's freedom. When Indian government adhered resolutely to this point, the Nagas decided to seek aid, moral and material, either from the white or brown or yellow for the achievement of their goal by fighting it out. They thought fanatically that they could achieve it with the assistance and sympathy of the western countries and the UN. Such an idea and beacon of hope developed when they went through the writings and the speeches of the western philosophers, statesmen, politicians and the Christian missionaries who fought for human rights, human survival, happiness and brotherhood. But the main reason why the Nagas were so strongly attached to independence was more to their moral animistic base which ordains not to be subjugated to an alien and upon which Christianity that came there had fervently injected an aspiration of individual freedom.

Above all, the Nagas looked at the joint declaration on 14 August 1941 of the American President, F.D. Roosevelt and the British Prime Minister, Winston Churchill, known as the Atlantic Charter stating that "they respect the right of all peoples to choose the form of government under which they will live; and they wish to see sovereign rights and self-government restored to those who have been forcibly deprived of them; they will endeavour, with due respect for their existing obligations, to further the enjoyment by all states, great or small, victor or vanquished, of access, on equal terms, to the trade and to the raw materials of the world which are needed for their economic prosperity...that all the men in all lands may live out their lives in freedom from fear and want." The Truman Doctrine also had made them believe that the West would come on their side. Over and above this, the Nagas took the Charter of the UNO with hope. Likewise, when India treated the Nagas as their own countrymen and did all that was possible to make them feel that India was and is their own country, the extremist Nagas, who strongly stood for a sovereign state, remained adamant. Ultimately fighting flared up between the Nagas and the Indian troops at different places in Nagaland, Manipur, Tripura, Assam and Burma. The Government had to take appropriate action and nearly got complete control of the situation in 1957, and some of the rebel Nagas who had left the extremist Nagas led by Phizo came out to work for peace, happiness and progress for the Nagas in India. By the time, the rebel Nagas almost exhausted their arms, ammunition and other fighting materials, lost many lives, and their morale was sagging. Their banal propaganda that foreign countries would succour their cause proved, at any rate, an empty boast, delusion and wishful thinking. People seethed with anger and discontent because of the tactics and methods adopted by the rebels for their conscription, in exacting foodstuffs and money from the poor villagers. Almost all the disgruntled people joined the Government in one way or other. At this time, in order to give credence to their tottering hope, to sustain their hold upon the general Nagas and to propagate their cause to the world, the rebel Nagas went indefatigably to the west and east in search of aid. How their ventures fared that we will see in the following pages.

PAKISTAN

We have seen that Pakistan, consisting of two parts, west and east, divided by 1,000 miles of Indian territory was born out of the Muslim majority areas in the Punjab, the provinces of Sind, Baluchistan

the North-West Frontier and Bengal, in an atmosphere of the compact politico-religious forces built up by mutual fear and hatred between the Muslims and the Hindus. Right since its birth, Pakistan had established a theocratic state and had susceptible illusion that the secular and democratic Indian state dominated by the majority Hindus was their enemy. Arising from this consideration, the avowed foreign policy of Pakistan was at large framed from the beginning to the present to lie ante to its Indian counterpart. As such, apart from the struggle of its existence and development, Pakistan wished to grow up the fissiparous tendencies of further secession in the parts of India.

First of all, Pakistan desired the wealthy Nizam, the Muslim ruler of Hyderabad over the 81 per cent Hindus to emerge as another Muslim sovereign state and incited the Muslim leaders there. But the secessionist Hyderabad was blockaded in a hundred hour military action on 18 September 1948, under the guidance of Jawaharlal Nehru for the sake of the consolidation of India which Sardar Patel had carried out in action. This unexpected use of force by non-violent India in Hyderabad demonstrated to Pakistan that India could resolutely deal with an act of aggressiveness in the case of any event between Pakistan and India. Likewise, Pakistan and India embarked upon a conflict in 1947-48 over Kashmir, which still remains a bleeding tumor in the flanks of both India and Pakistan.

On the eve of independence, the state of Jammu and Kashmir ruled by a Hindu king, Hari Singh, over an overwhelming majority of Muslims was given the choice either to accede to Pakistan or India or to remain as an independent state. While the king was vacillating on the horns of a dilemma, the kingdom was invaded by tribesmen instigated by Pakistan. Under such unforeseen political circumstances the Maharaja appealed to India for help on 24 October 1948 and signed the Instrument of Accession with India on November 26, provisionally pending a free and impartial plebiscite to determine people's wishes. The Indian troops took action and repelled invaders from the Kashmir valley and peace of Kashmir returned when India got control of approximate two-thirds of it and a cease-fire line was drawn and observed through the good offices of the United Nations. But the two nations continued a war of nerves and confrontations from time to time. What Pakistan actually wants of Kashmir was either to take as it an integral part of Pakistan or independent Kashmir through plebiscite which India would never allow, since it acceded to India and thus constitutes its part. Much of hostility marking relations between the two countries had been due to this wrangle

and ferocious fighting broke out in August 1965 after the tussle of Rann of Kutch. All times, Pakistan keenly looked for any part of India with hints of insurgence and tried to stir them up. The entire mass-media of Pakistan was utilised to whip up anti-Indian propaganda and campaign.

Among the unassimilated tribesmen of Assam, the Nagas revolted openly in the early 1955 against the authority of India for Nagaland sovereignty. Bearing in their minds that the rebel Nagas were not fit for independence, the Pakistan government or its agents fished for and indirectly abetted them for human rights to set against India as before to say that the Nagas and other hill people of Assam were not Indians and Pakistan government were really keen to assist them at any time if subversive activities could achieve their cause. At the same time, the Naga leaders also were alive to the fact that Pakistan had not emerged strong enough due to internal conflicts to help the Nagas though it got political, economic, military aid from the Islamic and western countries particularly the United States of America as a lever to the American interests of containing the expansion of communism from Russia and China. Moreover, Pakistan's political posture, it seems, was mainly to prop Nagas as a source of trouble to India or to create a party having hatred of India than to confirm the human rights, and to support their main cause at issue. This posture had set a moral conflict with the Nagas who were doctrinized to Christianity. The Nagas wanted only independent Nagaland as far as possible with the good wishes of India, not hatred and enmity or not to get themselves involved in another quarrel. But very reluctantly, the rebel Nagas, being caught in the whirlpool of circumstances, found no alternative except accepting Pakistan's terms and conditions to band together against India.

Initially, Zhukuto (Sema), the so-called Director of Intelligence of the Naga Federal government, visited Pakistan at the invitation of the Pakistan government in 1956 to explore the way for a visit by their leader. After remaining underground for a considerable time, Zaphu Phizo, the President of the Naga National Council escaped to East Pakistan in 1957 with the help of the Pakistani agents or of the Christian missionaries as alleged by some quarters, although the manner of his escape has been kept a mystery. But, it was known that some important rebel leaders went to Pakistan as Phizo's escorts. And while returning from there, some of them were either killed or arrested by the Indian Police at Silchar on 10 August 1957 and released after the general amnesty was announced. Now it

was a tangible evidence that Pakistan had extended its hand of assistance to the rebel Nagas in order to reanimate their force. While being questioned about the purpose of his visit to Pakistan, Mowu said, "I went to Pakistan to sponsor the Naga case to the United Nations. I was detailed to go by Khriesanisa Seyietsu of Khonoma. The Pakistan government did not agree to put our case to the UN. I came to know that no one or nation could sponsor our case to UN according to international law. Nor could any government supply us arms and ammunition also."

But it is interesting to see a detailed and delirious statement of Mowu however, he might have culminated his mission to Pakistan, in order to keep himself and that country safe. To quote his statement again: "I was invited to attend a meeting of the NNC held in the first week of August 1956 in Rengma area. I had no connection with NNC movement prior to this meeting. In this meeting Khriesanisa opened the discussion for sending some young men to foreign countries for apprising them of the situation prevailing in Nagaland and to enlist their sympathy towards our movement. The leader including Khriesanisa of the meeting selected me for the purpose, and I was instructed to work in the foreign countries on the above lines and to go to as many foreign countries as possible. After two or three days, Wheha Rengma of NNC handed over to me a sum of Rs.3000 in Indian currency to defray my journey expenses and gave me directions of the route which I should follow. I wanted to meet some Burmese officials, but some Burmese people, one of whose names so far I remember, U Ba of 38 Street, Rangoon told me that it was not possible to approach the Burmese government on this issue because they are friendly to Indian government and as such I gave up the plan. Further he told me that owing to the international bindings the Government of Burma would not be able to render any help to us. After that I reached Dacca and went to a hotel namely 'Green Hotel' probably at Romna town. On or about 15th October 1956 I met Ata-ur Rahman, the Chief Minister of East Pakistan in his residence, and there I disclosed my real identity and mission of going to Pakistan. I enquired from the Chief Minister whether he could render any help to the Naga people by supplying medicine and food, etc. I also requested him to sponsor our case to the UN. I did not submit any written memorandum to him but put up all our grievances to him verbally. In respect of the question of supply of food and medicine, the Chief Minister enquired how would it be possible to take if he agreed to supply. I suggested to him to make arrangement for air dropping, but he laughed at and did not

pass any opinion. In respect of representing our case to UN, he said that according to the international law he could not do anything.

"On 30 May 1957 Mr. R.R. Khan, Superintendent of Police, Dacca called us to his office and enquired as to what we were doing. I told him that we were practically doing nothing. I sought his permission to allow me to go to Karachi but he asked me to submit an application to that effect. When I was selected for going to foreign countries, I was also appointed as a representative of Naga Federal government in the meeting that was held at Rengma area in the first week of August 1956, to act as such in the foreign countries. Next day I again called on the same S.P. and submitted a letter containing my desire for going to Karachi to meet the Pakistani officials on the issue of our Naga freedom movement. In this letter I also requested the S.P. to make arrangement so that I might not fall into any difficulties for my being a Naga national at Karachi. After about 10 days I went to S.P. again who informed me that the Karachi authorities did not want that I should go and meet them there and that I should return to my own land."

Another young fellow namely Kepewekho (Angami) on the same mission went to Goa to seek the support of the Portuguese government and came back to Nagaland where he was arrested. After describing how he was detailed by the leaders of the NNC to contact foreign countries and how he reached the Portuguese border, Kepewekho said: "A coolie led me to the border check-post at Polem where I was checked by the Portuguese police. They made detailed enquiries about me and I told them that I had entered their territory without passport and that my intention was to seek necessary help from the Portuguese government in Goa to go to Pakistan to fulfil my mission of carrying out propaganda on behalf of the NNC. After I made a clean breast of my intentions, they said that they could not allow me to go further without order from their superiors. I was kept at the checkpost for four days and on fifth day they took me to a border post in a police van and produced me before a police officer to whom I repeated the story of my mission. He listened to my story and directed me to remain there until a reply was received from Lisbon, Portugal. I was kept in one of the rooms in the office building under watch for three days and on the fourth day was informed about the reply from Lisbon which said that Government of Portugal could not help me in my mission to go to Pakistan as that would amount to violation of the international law, which no nation could afford to do. They also

told me that in case they rendered any assistance to me directly or even indirectly to go to Pakistan to carry out my mission, and if the Government of India came to know of it, it would result in a very serious repercussion so far as Goa's stand in international affairs was concerned. After that they deputed men to lead me out of Goa. I was brought back to Polem in a police van. A day later I was led through the jungles to a village in the Indian territory." But the Government of India released both of them under the conditions of the general amnesty.

While Phizo was in Pakistan before he left to United Kingdom he sought Pakistan's recognition of Nagaland and help for raising the Nagaland issue in the United Nations. Realizing the unpalatable and serious consequences that would follow from such manifest expression of support to the rebel Nagas, although the conflict could no longer be portrayed as a mere domestic problem from their view, the Pakistan government made it known to the Nagas that Pakistan did not want to get itself embroiled with India directly at least for the moment. Nonetheless, Pakistan government did advise Phizo to go to U.K., and to raise the question from there as the present dispute between the Nagas and Indian government arose as the result of the British conquest and rule. The Pakistan government arranged everything for his journey and promised to give moral support and military aid, in the form of supply of arms and ammunition and training facilities to the Nagas in return for some concessions which Pakistan was to receive as and when the Nagas achieved their independence, though the former denied officially having any deal with the latter.

After reaching such understanding with the Pakistanis, Phizo left Karachi on 7 March 1960 for U.K. via Zurich and asked his followers to go to East Pakistan for arms and military training and continue fighting and depredations in Nagaland. At his behest some rebels went to East Pakistan, through dark jungles or detours sometimes through the Burmese territory for arms and training and brought a large range of weapons and ammunition including light machine guns, sten guns, rifles, mortars, medium machine guns and rocket launchers, etc. They took military training with special emphasis on the handling of bombs, firing 2" mortars, explosives for sabotage, like blowing up railway lines and convoys, jungle warfare and night operations, at camps such as Rangamati, Ruma, Bandar-bati, Rangkhia forest area, Alikadam and other places in Chittagong Hill tracts. The Pakistan government provided food, clothing, accommodation, transport and medical facilities while they were

there. More tempered was a letter written by the President of the Nagaland Federal government on 22 January 1959 to the President of Pakistan (according to a photostat copy seized but released by the Ministry of External Affairs) which runs as follows: "The Federal government of Nagaland has the honour in drawing the amount of Rs. 10,000 only from the Government of Pakistan. Aid to the Naga nation according to the news which has been brought by the attendants on Mr. Vihielie who had passed away before reaching the officials of the Naga Federal government. For the purpose of drawing for the same the Naga Federal authority has satisfied in authorising Mr. D. Tading Pau". At one occasion, on 1 May 1962, a group of rebels seeking to enter East Pakistan near Pirnagar were given cover by the East Pakistan Rifles to save them from being intercepted by the Indian Border Police. On 7 October 1962 Pakistan Foreign Minister, Mohammad Ali spoke in favour of the cause of the Nagas and said that the Government of India denied the fact that they were committing atrocities in Nagaland although atrocities were still being inflicted. In spite of the underground Nagas' stand for neutrality in the Indo-Pakistan war in 1965, they were compelled to send their leaders to East Pakistan to work out the details of participation before the war came to an end following cease-fire. Later on, the Mizos also were given the same training, weapons, provisions and other facilities, clearly borne out from documents seized from the Nagas as well as Mizos by the Indian security forces, including a letter written by Laldenga, the President of the Mizo National Front, addressed to President Ayub Khan for his sympathy and assistance to the people Mizoram in their struggle for freedom.¹

Pakistan Radio broadcasts and press propaganda also played virulently the same incendiary role. For example, it said: "The Nagas were not a part of India even during the days of British paramountcy. But the Indians marched their troops into free Nagaland to cow down, subdue and suppress the proud, sensitive people. The Indian jawans have since proved more brutal." On another occasion, Radio Pakistan on 23 August 1967 carried vitriolic attack on India: "Our struggle for freedom has its impact on other areas of Bharat also. Today the Bharati Nagas are following in our footsteps. The Bharati Defence and Home Ministers were forced by the activities of the Nagas to announce that the Bharati army suffered a humiliating defeat at the hands of the Naga nationalists.

¹ See also, Khan, Mohammed Ayub, *Friends, Not Masters*, London, 1967, p. 13.

The Naga nationalists today are fighting against the colonial power of Bharat as the Kashmiris are doing. They want freedom. They do not want to bow before the satanic power of the Bharati government. But the Bharati infernals are using all the might at their disposal to liquidate the Nagas and their freedom struggle. A revolution cannot be stopped by violent methods. It is bound to come into Bharat."

Pakistan government not only set up a liaison cell for contact and giving encouragement to the Nagas and Mizos but also rendered them the facilities to contact foreign missions in Dacca as well as facilities at ports to enable the underground representatives to visit foreign countries via Pakistan for furtherance of their goal. Such activities of the Pakistan government against the Government of India continued in total disregard of a clause of Tashkent agreement that "relations between India and Pakistan shall be based on the principle of non-interference in the internal affairs of each other."

On return from China the underground Brigadier Thinusellie, was sent to East Pakistan in late 1968 with a view to finalising arrangements for military training of the rebel Nagas. There a guerilla training centre was opened by the Chinese for the Nagas, Mizos, Kukis, Meiteis etc. A small air-strip was also constructed at a place near Rangamati, the headquarters of the Chittagong Hill tracts, to train these rebels in air operations. All these exacerbated the situation in a full scale flare-up in the sensitive areas of India. On 26 March 1970 the Government of India appeared to be justified in claiming that this was a clear-cut case for intervention and interference on the part of Pakistan and sent another strong protest note to Pakistan against economic help, shelter, military training and arms being given to the Nagas, Mizos, Kukis and Meiteis, stating that such an act of Pakistan not only constituted a gross interference in the internal affairs of India in a way to undermine India's security and integrity but was also a clear violation of the accepted standards of international behaviour and quite contrary to the spirit of the Tashkent declaration. The note also referred to a meeting of the hostile Naga-Mizos held on 15 February 1969 in the Chittagong Hill tracts in which representatives of the Governments of Pakistan and of the People's Republic of China were present and where discussions centred on developing East Pakistan as a centre of intertribal co-ordination.

In a diplomatic and devious reply to India's protests, Pakistan government every time denied giving any aid to them and agreed to stop their movement in spite of the difficulties of terrain. But the

real fact came to open light when some of the rebel Nagas and Mizos including Naga 'General' Thinusellie, his deputy, 'Brigadier' Nidilio and two other brigadiers along with the 90,000 Pakistani troops surrendered to the Indian forces in Dacca on 22 December 1971 after 14 days of Indo-Pakistan war in the wake of the emergence of sovereign Bangladesh and its virtual estrangement from West Pakistan while some other rebels followed by some Pakistani soldiers (Razakars) took shelter in the deep forests and inaccessible areas of Chittagong Hill tracts, Burma, Tripura, Mizoram, Manipur and Nagaland. Sure enough, this new situation had proved a big hurdle in directing, co-ordinating and carrying on the insurrectionist activities, which were carried from their bases in East Pakistan. Now it would appear extremely difficult for the rebels to secure Pakistan's military support when Pakistan itself is struggling hard for its survival after ignominious defeat. By degrees Pakistan is working for peace and amity with India in the sub-continent after Simla agreement on 2 July 1972 and her aid to Naga-Mizo rebels as before would endanger herself. But recent trends seem to indicate that she has not completely abandoned the idea of encouraging them as secret talks reportedly held between Mohammad Ali, the Pakistan Democratic Party Chief, Golam Aza, President of the Jamat-e-Islami and the Mizo insurgents during their visit to Arakan and Akyab in Burma. On the other hand, Pakistan has her own irritant—secessionist movement of over 11 million Pathan and Baluchi people since the Durand Line border between Afghanistan and British India was drawn by the British in 1893.

UNITED KINGDOM

We have read that the Nagas threw their lot with the British after their abortive war of independence in 1879. During the British rule in India, the British administrators and American missionaries pursued a course of policy and action which had made the western philosophy of life mingle together with the oriental Nagas that we find as in so much else similarities of social, political, economic and moral life at almost every point in spite of race and distance. Now they were disillusioned by the sudden exit of the British from India when what they had hoped from the British whom they thought as a paragon of justice, went fruitless. Rather the Nagas were surprised, when told that they would quit India and they should have settlement of their problem with India or Burma. Yet they were all agog with another expectation that the Indian government under the guidance of Mahatma Gandhi might have done something to their

demand for a sovereign Nagaland state. On the other hand, the Government of India, grown wiser as a result of horrors of partition out of schisms of Hindu-Muslim concept had firmly stood that all secessionist tendencies, whatever argument might be given, such a move should be suppressed with strength once and for all. The insistence of the Nagas for sovereignty or something near it like Sikkim and Bhutan, was rejected as illegal, unviable and unsound, on the extremely strategical Indian borders with China and Burma.

The rebel Nagas, as we know, fought the Indian troops with the dumped arms and ammunition collected from the Japanese and British forces in the Second World War and carried on the insurgence with their indigenous guerrilla methods without training, organisation and leadership in modern warfare, and foreign assistance. Now they realized that they could not go on fighting with India without foreign aid, however dogged they may be in determination. As such, the Naga Federal government, as referred to earlier, decided to send their leader Phizo to United Kingdom through Pakistan to mobilize the western countries for sympathy and support for the struggle of Nagaland. Phizo arrived in London via Zurich on 12 June 1960 with the assistance of Pakistan and of the Rev. Michael Scott by a forged Salvadorean passport which he had bought in black market in Manila, Philippines, according to his own admission. The choice of England by the Nagas to be a forum in preference to their neighbouring countries like Burma, China, Pakistan, U.S.S.R. was from the obvious fact that the conflict inherited from the British rule directly or indirectly so, as they imagined, and the British government might have said or taken a reflex action for them than maintaining that Nagas' problem was an internal issue of India. But his mission proved to be less successful than hoped for by the Nagas.

What the British government did was that Phizo was allowed to enter U.K. as a commonwealth citizen and later on conferred British citizenship after one year (November 6, 1961) under the British Nationality Act 1948. The possibility of his extradition was not going to be easy since there did not exist an extradition treaty between the two countries and the British government felt his case to be a political offence without any sense of extending recognition of insurgency in Nagaland. The Indian government also decided ultimately not to institute extradition proceedings as "we have no desire to have Phizo here" in the words of Prime Minister Nehru. Besides, extradition would have entailed some kind of trial in England itself. Therefore

the Government of India decided to allow Phizo to live in his own way there. But he was imputed for the murder of Sakhrie, his own cousin and his presence in India was liable to lead him arrest. But Phizo refuted this charge by stating that Sakhrie "was killed in a struggle with kidnappers outside my control after an abduction which I never authorised, and I could never have authorised such a killing for it would destroy the whole fabric and the very foundation of Naga community organisation. Sakhrie's death was not only a deep grief to me personally but an irreplaceable loss to our nation, since he was a gifted writer."¹ Accordingly, his request for safe conduct to visit Delhi in order to discuss a ceasefire in Nagaland and the appointment of an independent commission to look into the allegations of atrocious crimes and the constitutional future of Nagaland without prejudice to the existing position of either side, was refused. It had been a wise step on the part of the Government to ignore Phizo at his means because whatever sedition or even treason he may have committed, since the trial by India would only have influenced the already worsened situation and neither his conviction nor acquittal would have carried much weight to lessen the fighting elements there.

From London, Phizo conducted his anti-Indian propaganda saying that the Indian armies had inflicted iniquitous atrocities on innocent Nagas in the forms of torture, crucifixion, scalping, flogging, rape of women, forced prostitution, concentration camps and starvation in his bald pamphlet entitled, "*The Fate of the Naga People and Appeal to the World*". He also produced a documentation of almost 75,000 deaths of Naga men, women and children caused by Indian troops, a figure covering only the period of 1955-59. The Government of India described it as "reckless allegations against the Government and Indian army" and expressed regret over the British government's inability to keep its assurance that Phizo would not be allowed to carry out his activities from the soil of England, that would prejudice to the territorial integrity of India. *The Times*, in any editorial article aptly pointed out that, "on the straight issue of independence for the Nagas, the Indians certainly have a case. It is true that the Nagas differ from Indians in all important aspects of their civilisation. They are Mongoloid, untouched by Hinduism and partly Christianised. There is a legacy of suspicion from the British days in Indian mind just as among the Burmese over the Karens, though Phizo's support for the Japanese

¹ *NewStatesman*, London, September 3, 1960.

during the war should exonerate him from a too pro-British stamp. But the Naga territory can hardly qualify as a viable modern state. If such a state were created it might eventually stretch right into the North-East Frontier Agency and become a wedge conveniently placed for the Chinese to support. On this score the Indians have even better reasons now for refusing Phizo's claim than they had when the rebellion first became serious in 1955. They can now justify their refusal by giving the Nagas as great a share of autonomy as their distinctiveness warrants. Part of the trouble in early days grew out of a natural antipathy between the Nagas and the Assamese. In the past two years the Nagas had been administered directly from Delhi and if the Nagas feel that they are properly represented there then the settlement may work. Even then it may take some time before the Indian mistakes and misdeeds are expunged."¹

Some other British citizens expressed their sympathy for the Nagas. Among them, Rev. Michael Scott and Bertrand Russell, the humanitarian philosopher, are worth mentioning. In a way to induce the British on the Naga question, Rev. Scott said: "We cannot evade our share of responsibility in Britain for all that has led up to the present tragedy as Mr. Phizo's coming has reminded us. It was Britain's imperial policy which kept Nagaland isolated from India and from contact with the people and political movements of India so that there was very little exchange of ideas or mutual understanding of the people and their society when India became independent. On the other hand, many of the missionaries who were allowed there seem to have conveyed a peculiar form of religion based more on the verbal infallibility of the Bible and a social and political ethics more compatible with a violent form of nationalism than Christ's teaching in the Sermon on the Mount and the New Testament".

A Naga delegation consisting of 'General' Kaito, Youngking, 'Major-General' Mowu, and Khodao Yanthan succeeded in slipping into East Pakistan on 1 May 1962 despite the tight cordon of the Indian soldiers for interception; and some army officers were even reprimanded for lapse. Phizo arrived in Karachi by air from London on May 20 on the permission of the Pakistan government and met them at the Chittagong Hill tracts. President Ayub Khan felt greatly embarrassed and declared on May 28 that his Government would not allow the formation of a Naga govern-

¹August 1, 1960.

ment in exile in Pakistan. Then they decided to fly back to London. Knowing this the British Home Office had advised the B.O.A.C. on August 28, not to carry the delegation and informed the International Committee for the Study of Group Rights (a body recently formed to study the problem of minority groups within sovereign states, which had sponsored the delegation's visit) that they would be refused permission to land unless they had satisfactory identity and re-entry permits. After the Pakistan government had granted them re-entry permits on September 7, they flew to London in a Qantas Airliner from Karachi on September 10, and were detained at London airport on the ground that the documents on which they were travelling did not give correct evidence of their nationality. Only after the Indian High Commission had informed the British government on the following day that they were Indian citizens, only then they were allowed to enter.

It was said that during their short stay in London, 'General' Kaito became censorious of Phizo's poor performance in his mission to the West and quarrelled incisively with him. 'General' Kaito was forced to believe that the freedom movement would extend to other parts of Manipur, Assam and Burma and they would seek help from big powers, particularly U.S.S.R. and Communist China even to the extent of accepting communism if the western nations failed to support them to which Phizo strongly objected (even to the entertainment of such an idea) as a vicious idea to destroy the whole original movement and interest of Naga nation and a ruin of their society. Since then, controversy had raged around the stand of Kaito. Anyhow, Kaito group returned to Nagaland in March 1963 with a heavy load of arms, ammunition and explosives but with their confidence shaken. Even, when Sir Paul Gore Booth, the British High Commissioner in India, visited Kohima on 29 February 1964, he did not say anything about the British policy towards the Nagas but conveyed the good wishes of the British government and people to the people of Nagaland.

Some other British, particularly former administrators like J.H. Hutton felt that the present status of Nagaland within India fulfilled the Nagas' desire to be independent in the management of their affairs. On 9 July 1966, *The Guardian* wrote: "Indians have been leaning over backwards to find some way of giving the Nagas satisfaction without actually giving them what they want. The Nagas want independence and no diplomatic formula can dress up the solution that falls short of this aim. Conceivably, Indians could move from their inflexible position if it were not for the fact that in addition

to traditional dislike which any Central government has for seceding provinces, Nagaland is in their most sensitive border area. Contiguous with Burma and close to East Pakistan and China, the Nagas could hardly have been more unfortunately located. For strategic reasons India is unlikely ever to budge".

Now the question remains to be asked is why Phizo has been in U.K. as the national leader of the Nagas. His mission to the West of enlisting foreign support for freedom under the circumstances, has flickered on. At this point, his host Rev. Scott said: "They (Nagas) want to be associated with the West because of the religious and other affiliations with what they have been taught to think of a free world, if the West is not prepared to help them they will go on fighting without. But they want it to be known that the time may come when the fighting forces will have to seek help elsewhere despite unfavourable political implications. This, they want to be understood, will be the logical consequences of India's past and present policy. It would not be their (Nagas) choice and nor would it, they say, be right for the world than to blame those to whom they may be forced to turn." Recently, the London-based Minority Rights Group brought out a 32-page booklet, entitled, "*India and the Nagas*" written by Neville Maxwell, former correspondent of *The Times*, and accused India with a series of atrocity charges, following the end of cease-fire agreement in September 1972. Again Patrick Montgomery, Secretary of the Anti-Slavery Society compared the India's pacification drive and alleged atrocities committed in Nagaland to Mozambique in an article¹ and urged the British people to speak up for the Nagas as the latter supported the British allied forces during the World War II. In view of these press comments, the Prime Minister, Mrs. Indira Gandhi, addressing a public meeting at Kohima on 1 December 1973 on the 10th anniversary of Nagaland state, said that she wondered why these people who had never shown any concern for the progress and welfare of Nagaland or north-eastern India, who lived so far away and who had never hesitated to exploit the whole country for their own purpose, should take interest in Nagaland. She asked the Nagas not to be misguided by propaganda of interested elements and to consider seriously why these people were showing sudden interest in Nagaland and what the motive of this people could be.²

However, the Phizoites still hang on to the British in the hope that

¹ *The Times*, London, November 14, 1973.

² *The Times of India*, New Delhi, December 2, 1973.

Naga issue was one of the problems, as said above, bequeathed to the successor state—India that it faces today and at some occasion the British may use their political lever in favour of the Nagas.

The other western countries have kept silent over the Nagas' case taking it as a purely domestic matter concerning India alone and that they have no authority to intervene. Moreover, for the present, they seem to be guided in the line of thinking that, "in such a strategically vital area India is not likely to allow a weak, independent state to be set up. Nor have the Nagas yet shown any qualification for statehood."¹ Yet some westerners have privately expressed their individual opinions from time to time in favour of the freedom of Nagaland. Besides, France was silent about the Naga question since it considered it purely an internal Indian problem. Keeping in mind the Declaration of French Revolution of 1791 on the rights of man such as, "All men are born free and with equal rights must always remain free and enjoy equal rights", and the subsequent ideal tenets of liberty, equality and fraternity, Phizo attempted to have an interview with French President, Charles de Gaulle, but was not successful. However, the Nagas purchased various quantities of arms manufactured in a number of European countries, including France and from the international smugglers of the private sources on nominal payment through Pakistan.² "But whatever the eventual settlement," Swinson, a British writer puts, "one hopes that the Nagas, this strange, courageous race, will be left to enjoy their mountain home, without interference. The Naga Hills have seen enough bloodshed to test for centuries."³

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

We have seen in the preceding chapter that the Nagas came into contact with the United States of America through the American Baptist missionaries who brought Christianity in Nagaland during the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. These missionaries, fired with great evangelical impulse, worked hard in their endeavours to awaken the Nagas to the modern aspects of life along, of course, with the British administration. They not only preached Christianity, philosophy, law, customs, habits of thought, culture, heritage, literature, freedom, history and civilization but also distributed books, news magazines, pamphlets and leaflets freely or at a very low cost, to the

¹ *The Manchester Guardian*, London, October 7, 1957.

² *The Amrita Bazar Patrika*, Calcutta, July 20, 1967.

³ *Kohima*, London, 1966, p. 255.

Nagas from time to time. They also taught the Nagas how America was discovered by Columbus, an Italian, in 1492; then how the United States of America was formed by the different migrated nationalities from Europe and other countries and how these people fought together for human freedom, rights and social progress for all mankind in the war of independence against the British rule under the leadership of George Washington (1732-1799) with the arms imported from France, Holland, Spain and other European countries. They reminded the Nagas to get themselves politically united and to withhold their right for freedom gloating over the Bill of Rights, the Declaration of the Rights of Man, the Declaration of Independence particularly its historic words, i.e., "All men are created equal; they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable rights; among these are life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness", the American constitution and the gospel of liberty, revolt, reform, democracy, Christianity, etc. Thus the American missionaries preached and sometimes behaved as Parker Thomas Moon pointed out in 1926: "Going out to preach the kingdom not of this world, missionaries found themselves very often builders of very earthy empires. Sometimes they promoted imperialism quite unintentionally ...Protestant missionaries representing national churches have doubtless been particularly disposed to regard themselves as representative pioneers of their own nation."

Nevertheless, it is certain from the available sources that the American missionaries had tended and developed no imperialistic schemes to work out for an American colony like Philippines, of a Christian Naga sovereign state under their guidance and government. What they did was that they occasionally advised the British administrators as to how the Nagas would be brought into their dominion and the sash of their civilization. Sometimes, they threw the seeds of their historical growth for freedom upon the wild, free, individualistic and primitive political minds of the Nagas. When India became free from the British rule, the Nagas accidentally used them as the weapons to fight against the Government of India. As a result, the American missionaries were removed from Nagaland under the suspicion of the Government of India that the nurturement of the Naga nationalist upsurge was perhaps directed by the missionaries while the Roman Catholic mission of Italian Fathers who are directed by Pope from the Vatican City was allowed to continue, mostly for the cause of spreading education among the Nagas as an aid to Government's efforts since the Italian Fathers had been politically insignificant.

While working as the headmaster of the Kohima High School, G. W. Supplee (1921-1949), one of the American Baptist missionaries, dissuaded the Naga students from joining the Indian Independence Day celebrations on 15 August 1947 and for this act he was externed in 1948. But another missionary P. F. Adams was against the Naga independence movement from India, that we see from his tentative suggestion in valedictory speech in September 1947. He said: "I should like to give you my personal ideas as to what is the best policy for the Nagas in the present changed conditions. Some of you may not agree with me, but please believe me that I have no other interest than the welfare of the Naga people. What do the Nagas really want? What they really want is, I think to protect their land so that others shall not come and take it; the right to govern themselves according to their own customs; to be assured that peace and order will be maintained so that men, women and children can move about freely without fear; to see that their children are well fed, well-clothed and well educated; to see that others do not exploit them; and that the Nagas shall develop their own resources. These and other similar things are, I feel, what are really wanted. Words like "Independence" and "autonomy" do not mean anything unless they secure these basic things. The villages in the trans-frontier are more or less independent, but they are very poor, often hungry, their children die of disease because there are no hospitals or medicine, their men, women, and children never know when they may be killed by men from another village—of what use is independence to them. Is there one village in Kohima or Mokochung that would be willing to change places with trans-frontier village ?

"The understanding that the Naga National Council came to with the Assam governor in Kohima protects all fundamental rights, and I see that the Prime Minister of India, Pandit Nehru is reported as having said that the Nagas could have "complete autonomy". Does not this in actual fact give you everything you need, and in addition assure you of the help of a rich and powerful country in developing your land? This does, as I think it does, give you what you want, why should you sacrifice all this for the word 'independence'? India will never agree to 'Independence' and what can the Nagas gain by a conflict with a country representing 300,000,000 people. The Nagas have nothing to gain, and may lose everything...

"For the sake of your future peaceful development and welfare, and for that of your children, you must think very carefully and not to be misled by long speeches and words. You must, each one of

you, think what will be best for your family, village and people. As a friend of the Naga people, I would urge you as strongly as I can, to accept the offer of autonomy, and then to devote your united energy to using the opportunities it offers to building up a strong and prosperous Naga people. It may be that we shall not meet again but I hope that some day we shall be able to talk together once more. To all the Naga people, and, in particular, to our many friends, my wife and I wish to offer our thanks for all the help and kindness we have received while we have been among you. We have valued, and still do value, your friendship highly, and wherever we may be, we shall always be ready to do what may be in our power to help you. We sincerely hope that the future will bring you peace, prosperity and happiness."

Considering such speeches as setting against their own inborn right of independence existence and seeds of imperialism, the extremist Naga leaders unheedingly continued their demand for sovereign Nagaland state and asked the missionaries to use their influence upon their governments in their favour. But the American government was reluctant to say anything for the Nagas for the fear of jeopardising the Indo-American relations although the American individuals, and newspapers sometimes published articles on the Nagas as well as letters written by the Naga people from time to time. During the formative period, the Nagas gazing Thomas Jefferson's words, "Every man and every body of men on earth, possess the right of self-government" still hoped that United States would one day come to their assistance. Such belief of the Nagas rightly or wrongly stemmed from the plain fact of the foundation of Christianity and anti-colonial policy of U.S.A. reflected in the speech of President H. S. Truman, a shrewd, doughty and courageous politician, in New York on 27 October 1945 in which he stated: "We seek no territorial expansion or selfish advantage. We have no plans for aggression against any other state, large or small. We have no objective which need clash with the peaceful aims of any other nation. We believe in the eventual return of sovereign rights and self-government to all peoples who have been deprived of them by force. We shall approve no territorial changes in any friendly part of the world unless they accord with the freely expressed wishes of the people concerned. We believe that all peoples who are prepared for self-government should be permitted to choose their own form of government by their own freely expressed choice, without interference from any foreign source. That is true in Europe, in Asia, in Africa, as well as in the western hemisphere. By the combined and

co-operative action of our war Allies, we shall help the defeated enemy states establish peaceful, democratic governments of their own free choice. And we shall try to attain a world in which Nazism, Fascism, and military aggression cannot exist. We shall refuse to recognize any government imposed upon any nation by the force of any foreign power. In some cases it may be impossible to prevent forceful imposition of such a government. But the United States will not recognise any such government. We believe that all nations should have the freedom of the seas and equal rights to the navigation of boundary rivers and waterways and of rivers and waterways which pass through more than one country. We believe that all states which are accepted in the society of nations should have access on equal terms to the trade and the raw materials of the world... We believe that full economic collaboration between all nations, great and small, is essential to the improvement of living conditions all over the world, and to the establishment of freedom from fear and freedom from want. We shall continue to promote freedom of expression and freedom of religion throughout the peace-loving areas of the world. We are convinced that the preservation of peace between nations requires a United Nations Organization composed of all the peace-loving nations of the world who are willing jointly to use force if necessary to insure peace." In another speech on 12 March 1947 President Truman calling for a programme of aid to Greece and Turkey said, "I believe that it must be the policy of United States to support free peoples who are resisting attempted subjugation by armed minorities or by outside pressure."

Such of President Truman's speeches, which underlined the traditional American desire for peace, security, freedom, happiness, opposition of force, coercion and territorial aggrandisement as instruments of policy deeply took the Naga fancy that the United States which stood for the return of the lost sovereignty of any nation would reach their hands to them.

Here the Naga Leaders, in their own dream world, did hardly realize that after the war many changes took place which transformed the globe altogether and America itself too embarked upon the road to refined imperialism in disguise of freedom to contain communism and Soviet-China influence, the veiled conflict that gave rise to cold war. On the other hand, the American government was silent on the question whether the Naga problem was the internal affair of India or otherwise. But the American public opinion as reflected in the press, supported the same Indian point of view. At the creation of a new administrative unit of the Naga Hills, independent

of Assam but under the Central government's direction, *The New York Times* congratulated the Prime Minister, Pandit Nehru for taking a constructive and realistic view of the problem raised by the freedom-loving Nagas for independence and wrote: "That troublesome question of the status of the Naga tribesmen in north-eastern India appears now to have been solved upon a sensible and humane basis. For two years these primitive people have been in revolt, demanding a homeland of their own, recognition of their right to self-rule and freedom from the provincial authority of Assam. The strife that followed was pointless and fruitless...That is not the 'Independence' that was demand by the rebels, but it is a recognition that the Naga peoples are entitled to special treatment under their own separate government...Peripheral problems such as these must often be solved in the establishment of new nations. Unsolved, they can be troublesome irritants. The applications of force is seldom satisfactory. But reason and goodwill can prevail in time. 'Nagaland' can go forward within the Indian Union with the feeling that its basic complaint has been met. It has been met by Indians with insight and sympathy. Equally important is the proclamation of a complete amnesty for all those who have been in rebellion. They may return to their homes as free men with no fear of prosecution. They are recognised citizens within the state."¹

On 4 April 1967, Phizo, the President of the Naga National Council went to U.S.A. from London to seek support for independence of the Naga state from India, to meet various people at different levels and to discuss the Naga problem with the officials of the United States in Washington as he stated in an interview to *The New York Times*.² His visit raised a mild controversy between the Governments of U.S.A. and India as to how he was allowed to enter there. The American government stated that Phizo came nominally to U.S. for medical treatment for his partial facial paralysis from which he was suffering for many years and assured the Government of India that he would not be allowed to utilize his presence in U.S. to indulge in any political activity. Ostensibly, Phizo if not disappointed, failed to enlist any significant support for the Naga independence from the Baptist missionary organizations which had long been active in Nagaland as well as in certain countries, to raise the Naga question in the United Nations. Yet, he claimed a great oral success of his USA visit in his letter addressed to Khugato and Mhiasiu. He wrote: "The present talks with

¹ December 16, 1957.

² April 27, 1967.

India will have to be continued, as we will not be the first party to break the series of consultations. If the Indian government wants to discontinue the talks, we shall leave the matter to it...prospect of taking our case before the highest world forum has become brighter than ever before. We can now be sure that nothing can prevent us from appealing to the world for justice. My mission to America has been a great success and people outside have begun to study our case very seriously. We have come very near to our goal and we now do not have to wait very long."

On 14 August 1967 Chester Bowles,¹ the U.S. Ambassador to India, under the President Johnson government of the Democratic Party said in a statement that "on the seventh of August a question was raised in the Lok Sabha about the U.S. policy towards Nagaland. The question referred to an article in which a private American citizen expressed views which are not held by the U.S. government. This was not the first nor will it be the last private expression of views not in accordance with U.S. government policy. Speaking on behalf of my Government I can say that the U.S. government has no policy towards Nagaland. Nagaland is an inseparable part of the Indian Union just as Illinois is a part of U.S. It would be just as inconceivable for U.S.A. to develop a policy concerning Nagaland as it would be for India to have a policy for Illinois."

Though this statement was not direct from the Government of United States, it indicated that the United States did not want at the moment to have a separate Naga policy different from the British stand that Nagaland had been a part of India even if they sympathised with the cause of Nagaland in private individual views and discussions. As recently as in 1971, it was rumoured that 'General' Thinsullie of the Federal Naga government who surrendered to Indian forces in December 1971, was sent by Mao Tse-tung and Chou-En-Lai to U.S. to have an answer whether U.S.A would come to rescue or intervention of India if the Nagas, Mizos and other people of the north-western of South-East Asia would rise up against India with the communist aid. The answer went down with him in the jail. Again it was in the rumours that U.S. Ambassador, Kenneth Keating suggested that the Ahom, Khasi-Garo, Naga, Mizo, Kuki, Chin, Meitei, Shan and Kachin people should form a United Mongolian States so as to get military, political and economic aid from U.S. than the Communist China. Quite interestingly, when

¹ See *Promises to Keep: My Years in Public Life*, 1941-69, Delhi, 1972, p. 539.

Edward Kennedy visited India in August 1971, he proposed to the Indian Planning Minister that intensive development schemes could be drawn up for the whole eastern region, since the economy of this area had been shattered by, among other things, successive waves of refugees in the past 20 years and suggested that this development should be promoted by international aid over and above the usual Aid-India Consortium funds. On 9 January 1972, Ivan Shchedrove, Dacca correspondent of *Pravda*, the Soviet Communist Party paper reported that "quite Americans airlifted weapons and supplies to rebels in remote areas of Nagaland under the guidelines of the Central Intelligence Agency."

On 20-24 November 1972 Dr. Billy Graham, the famous American Baptist Evangelist and a close friend of President Richard Nixon accompanied by some evangelists visited Nagaland in connection with the centenary of Impur where the American Baptist mission laid its foundation to spread Christianity throughout Nagaland and to conduct congregation at Kohima. Delivering a series of sermons at a gathering of about 100,000 persons in the Evangelist Crusade, he called upon the people to spread the gospel of love and universal brotherhood and reminded the coming of Jesus Christ and the Kingdom of God for the whole humanity. Simultaneously, the rebel Nagas synchronised it by attacking army convoys and killed four security men and a few others injured in spite of the assurance given by Zashei Huire, the Federal Naga President to the Church leaders not to breach Graham's Prayer meetings. The motive of their attacks was to demonstrate their existence and violent activities and to impress upon Billy Graham who could possibly persuade President Nixon to do something for the Christian Nagas. Again, in a review of world situation in the context of U.S. foreign policy, the Evangelist declared his hope on the normalisation of the Indo-US relations which had frozen on the question of Bangladesh liberation. Rev. Longri asked him not to discuss the Naga issue with Mrs. Indira Gandhi for possible development of misunderstanding as the future of Christianity in the region would depend on the Indo-US amity. At Delhi, he said that he had wonderful time and success, with the Nagas and hoped that the Christian crusade for love in Nagaland would help to solve many problems.

But, in all, his visit had aroused political awareness than ecclesiastical zeal of the Nagas, in spite of the Americans' reluctance to get enmeshed in politically weak people and to make every conflict, small and large in the world its own as world policemen. Nor does any CIA activity prove there plausible. Yet in politics as its nature

shows, can never be said for long for how a country shall behave or react as it depends on its own inseparable interest and expediency of national and international political situation. And the Christian and western affiliated Nagas look in fantasy to the Americans for both cultural and political ties as to catch the words of President Nixon, "American support for Asian initiatives."

UNITED NATIONS

The rebel Nagas who have thought that India has committed an act of aggression against the people of Nagaland look at the principles laid down in the Charter of the United Nations, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the Declaration of the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples, etc. We know that United Nations is a gleam of hope for human survival, with its main purposes to save succeeding generations from the scourge of war, to maintain international peace and security, to develop friendly relations among nations based on respect for the principle of equal rights and self-determination of peoples, to achieve international co-operation in solving international problems of an economic, social, cultural or humanitarian character, to be a centre for harmonizing the actions of nations in the attainment of these common ends, to emphasise on the equal and inalienable rights of all peoples including the right to self-determination as well as from the specific chapter XI of the Charter and the General Assembly's resolution on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples, as adopted in 1960. Of course, the United Nations has given its consistent support for the universally recognised right of freedom, self-determination and independence and has taken a great deal of efforts and assistance to encourage the emergence of dependent peoples, however meagre for well-known reasons. These ideas and ideals of the United Nations and the stereo-types of great men's speeches and writings have mesmerised upon the Nagas however precluding from the realistic political trends and events as the nations in dispute seek to deal their differences by peaceful negotiation and discussion by the terms of the Charter before resorting to war to solve them. Now we will examine how the Nagas are induced with strongly held conviction to these in their quest for freedom.

First of all, we have to know that the United Nations, as a rule, observe the principle of non-interference in matters lying essentially within the domestic jurisdiction of any state under Article 39 of the Charter except in the case of "trust territories." As such, no nation has seriously come forward to question the stand of the Government

of India regarding the Naga problem, being considered purely an internal matter of India and rather a civil revolt if India herself does not raise.¹

But we will find some references in the UN by some interested members occasionally as an instrument to criticise Indian government rather than to support the Naga cause overtly in the name of humanity, freedom, justice, denial of fundamental human rights and exploitation and torture. On the other hand, the rebel Nagas have made considerable individual efforts to take up the Naga case, without success, of course, before the United Nations as a struggle for independence from India not in a way of civil revolt *fait accompli* as understood at present.

When the result of the plebiscite held by the Nagas on the issue of Naga independence in May 1951 could not produce any change in the stand of the Government of India that Nagaland was and became a constituent part of the Union of India during and after the British period, the Nagas still clung on firmly to the contention that India would look sympathetically at their historical background and transfer their sovereignty as the British did. Moreover, the Nagas believed that India as a peaceful, non-violent country would settle the Naga problem by peaceful means as set down, for instance, in Article 33(1) of the United Nations Charter which commits member-states to seek a solution of any dispute which is likely to endanger international peace and security "by negotiation, enquiry, mediation, conciliation, arbitration, judicial settlement, resort to regional agencies, or other peaceful means of their own choice". Again, the Nagas were qualified to believe that the Indian government would not use force against the minority Nagas under Section 4, Article 2 of the Charter which stated that "all members shall refrain in their international relations from the threat or use of force against the territorial integrity or political independence of any state, or in any other manner inconsistent with the purposes of the United Nations."

After the failure of the interview of the Naga delegation with the Prime Minister, Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru, on 11 March 1952, the NNC sent a letter to the controversial UN Secretary-General, Trygve Lie of Norway (1946-53) with a request for mediation on Naga problem. But Trygve Lie, under the Article 99 of the UN Charter which states that the Secretary-General may bring to the attention of the Security Council any matter which in his opinion may threaten the maintenance of international peace and security, did not feel

¹ See Evan Luard, *The International Regulation of Frontier Disputes*, London 1970, p. 22.

it to be a serious question like Kashmir and kept silent as this being an internal problem of India. Moreover, the UN General Assembly Resolution of 1949 entitled *The Essentials of Peace Resolution* calling on all nations to "refrain from any threats or acts, direct and indirect, aimed at impairing the freedom, independence or integrity of any State, and fomenting civil strife and subverting the will of the people in any state" discouraged him to question deeper the historical background of the Nagas even if he so wished.

On 26 July 1960 Phizo, the President of the NNC, declared in a press conference in London that Nagas would submit their case to the United Nations if no better understanding came of his plea for a reasonable political solution with India. He did not indicate how and when the question was going to be placed if India refused to discuss the problem being a domestic matter to which UN could have no direct supervision as trust territories under Chapter XI of the Charter. Somehow, on October 8, Phizo addressed a memorandum to the UN, saying that the Nagas were not Indians and India invaded Nagaland for which UN had to mete justice to the Nagas. But no answer was made available to Phizo. However, hoping for the best, the rebel Nagas gloated over the General Assembly's resolution on 14 December (1960) which declares that:

"The subjection of peoples to alien subjugation, domination and exploitation constitutes a denial of fundamental human rights, is contrary to the Charter of the United Nations and is an impediment to the promotion of world peace and co-operation; all peoples have the right to self-determination, by virtue of that right they freely determine their political status and freely pursue their economic, social and cultural development; inadequacy of political, economic, social or educational preparedness should never serve as a pretext for delaying independence; all armed action or repressive measures of all kinds directed against dependent peoples shall cease in order to enable them to exercise peacefully and freely their right to complete independence, and the integrity of their national territory shall be respected; immediate steps shall be taken, in trust and non-self-governing territories or all other territories which have not yet attained independence, to transfer all powers to the peoples of those territories, without any conditions or reservations, in accordance with their freely expressed will and desire, without any distinction as to race, creed or colour, in order to enable them to enjoy complete independence and freedom; any attempt aimed at the partial or total disruption of the national unity and the territorial integrity of a country is incompatible with the purposes and principles of the Charter of the

United Nations; all states shall observe faithfully and strictly the provisions of the Charter of the United Nations, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the present Declaration on the basis of equality, non-interference in the internal affairs of all states and respect for the sovereign rights of all peoples and their territorial integrity."

Catching even at a straw as means, Phizo submitted a petition to the International Commission of Jurists and in it he charged India as carrying out genocide against the sheer minority Nagas. On 10 May 1963, addressing a press conference in London, Rev. Michael Scott and Phizo said that they intended to put up the Naga case before the United Nations.

On 15 May 1964, welcoming Rev. Scott, pointing out the UN General Assembly resolution, citing the example of Zanzibar, and appealing to Scott to raise the Naga question in the UN, Scato Swu, President of the Federal government concluded: "It is the sacred duty of the United Nations to immediately send international observers to Nagaland to move about without hindrance of any kind, who will regularly report on Indo-Naga affairs. Please shout at the top of your voice in the ears of the United Nations, and tell them that the case of Nagaland is a thousand times more serious than that of Kashmir or Cyprus". In November 1965 Rev. Scott wrote a letter to the Secretary General of the UN, asking him to take up the Naga case as we referred to earlier.

In May 1964 Z.A. Bhutto,¹ a rich western educated, Foreign Minister of Pakistan said in a vituperative statement in the Security Council that the Indian representative had been silent about "systematic and brutal persecution of the Nagas which has been going on in Eastern India for many years". He also quoted from a report in the *London Observer* to the effect that leading Nagas had been beaten to death and shot in a bid to destroy the spirit of the Naga community. Further, he added that brutalities of this kind had been perpetrated on the Nagas for quite some time and in spite of India's "ruthless drive to crush the spirit of the Nagas, the people had resisted". But the other UN members still considered the Naga problem as a civil conflict within the Union of India and to raise any question would be intervention in the Indian domestic affairs or assistance to the rebel forces aiming at overthrowing the legitimate Government of India. Again, in his fervid speech against the nuclear powers joining together to guarantee non-nuclear powers against nuclear attack in the UN Assembly on 23 January 1965, Bhutto said

¹ See *The Myth of Independence*, London 1969, p.180.

that "India is following a deliberate policy of denial of the right of self-determination not only in the case of Kashmir but also in its suppression of the valiant tribesmen of Nagaland..."

Here, as we know that Bhutto's underlying basis of reference to the UN was perhaps to attack India in the cloak of self-determination and in an indirect way of support to the cause of the Nagas. Whatever Bhutto's intentions might be, for the independence of the Nagas, we see the other side of the position of the Government of India from the reply given by India's Permanent Representative, Chakravarty on 27 January 1965. Replying to insidious charges of Bhutto, concerning Kashmir and Nagaland, he said, "if Pakistan wants self-determination in Kashmir and Nagaland, constituent states of India, why does it not agree to grant self-determination to East Pakistan, Baluchistan or the disputed territory of Pakhtoonistan?"

Once again in October 1966, Rev. Scott tried unsuccessfully to open up the Naga question before the United Nations in the meeting of the Fourth Committee on Colonialism when he spoke on the question of the South-East Africa as a petitioner. It was quite interesting as to how he put up the Nagaland question. The Pakistani delegate, Ahmad Ali, questioning the petitioner asked Rev. Scott what he had been doing for the last two years and why he who was dealing with South-West Africa before, had not been seen in the UN recently. Scott then began talking of his having been engaged "in another part of the world where people were being oppressed" and began expounding the Naga problem. The Indian delegate, Bhagwat Jha Azad, objected to at this very stage and its Sudanese Chairman told Scott to conclude his remarks quickly. The Pakistani delegate then intervened to suggest that the petitioner should be allowed to complete his replies. Scott again began with reference to the Nagas and the Nagaland Peace Mission. But Azad once again took strong exception to what he said. The Chairman thereupon asked Scott to confine himself to the subject before the Committee viz. South-West Africa and not to talk about the Nagas irrelevantly. Then Azad also moved that Rev. Scott's remarks about Nagaland should be struck off the records and the Chairman said that the request had been "noted". Thus, little success for hope in the UN attended the efforts made directly or indirectly to raise the Naga issue, although Phizo understood U Thant's words, "Self-determination remains the most sacred right of all peoples who still find themselves subjected."¹

¹ *Statement to Assembly of Heads of State and Government of Organisation of African Unity, Kinshasa, Congo, September 14, 1966 (Press release SG/SM/805).*

Again, on 22 October 1968 Dr. Wei Tao-ming, the Foreign Minister of Taiwan told the UN General Assembly that the People's Republic of China was giving training and arms to thousands of rebel Nagas in Yunnan province and sending them back to India to fight against the legitimate Government of India. Further he said that similar subversive elements were made available to the Burmese insurgents also. Yet the other members of the UN keeping another 1965 resolution which declared that no state should interfere in civil strife of another state were not at this time prepared to discuss the Naga issue like various guerrilla movements involving foreign assistance in Latin America, although the UN discussed some other questions on the grounds of external interference and assistance, on a lavish scale such as the allegations of assistance for rebel forces from communist neighbours in case of the Greek civil war, from Syria and the UAR in case of Lebanon (1958), from Britain in the case of Muscat (1958-60), from North Vietnam in the case of Laos (1959) and from the UAR and Saudi Arabia in case of Yemen (1962-65).

At present, neither Pakistan nor any other country including China keeping the rebel Nagas in support, seems to be least bit interested in raising the Naga question under Articles 34 and 36 of the Charter before the Security Council of the UN as situation does not warrant in the return of peace and normalcy in Nagaland within the domestic affairs of India. Moreover, foreign intervention will be a violation of the Charter of the United Nations as well as principles concerning friendly relations among States, passed during the Twentyfifth Anniversary of the UN in 1970 which declares that every state has the duty to refrain from organising, instigating, assisting or participating in acts of civil strife or terrorist acts in another state or acquiescing in organised activity within its territory directed towards the commission of such acts, when the acts referred to in this paragraph involve a threat or use of force. Thus, at any rate, evidence and action is lacking to substantiate vision of the Nagas to get UN support even if it stands for human freedom at large.

BURMA

The intercourse between the Nagas and the Burmese is as old as the story of their origin and migration was. Historically, almost all the Mongolian Peoples of Assam, Bhutan, Sikkim, Nepal, Lahaul, Spiti Ladakh, Tibet, Burma have almost the same origin from China or elsewhere and migrated one wave after another towards the south-western parts where they are now. At the same time, some Nagas migrated from there towards the hill areas, i.e., the Naga Hills,

Manipur hills and the NEFA hills which they occupy for centuries, while others settled in the Somra Hill tract and other places permanently now called Burma. Therefore, the earliest relations between the Nagas and the Burmese were those of the same stock and blood than anything else.

After the Burmans had established themselves fairly well in the plains, they fought out the Shans, Kachins, Talaings and other weak tribes successfully. But they had to make their tough way to subjugate the Meiteis, Kacharis, Jaintias, Ahoms, Nagas, Mizos, Kukis and the like in the plains as well as in the hills. On the other hand, the Meiteis (Manipuris) and Ahoms also were embarking to hold sway over other tribes. In this way, first of all, the Burmese and the Manipuris had a number of wars that we have seen. Fortunately, these wars were almost confined to the valleys which link the two kingdoms. The Burmese could not reach the mountainous tracts where the Nagas and other allied tribes sparsely lived, although they had knowledge and geographical descriptions that there were such people who migrated from Burma long ago and there had never been any war between the Nagas and the Burmese. The Manipuris and Assamese used to recruit the Nagas and later on Kukis who lived nomadly at the fringes of the foothills to fight against the Burmese. In the last invasions and rule of Manipur and Assam until 1824, the Burmese certainly laid their claim upon the Naga-inhabited hills and started penetrating into the Naga villages lying on the foothills of Manipur and Assam. Ultimately, their defeat at the hands of the British in the First Anglo-Burmese War proved disastrous to them and they gave up the hope to contact the Nagas because of the difficulty of communications in the mountains.

After the war the relations between the Nagas and Burmese were hardly known, except occasional border clashes and friendship. The British fully authorised the Manipur Raja for the control of the Nagas as far as he could afford to go ahead. This encouragement was, of course, stopped later on. And after the Second Anglo-Burmese War in 1852, King Thabou tried to consolidate his position with the help of the French who had already occupied the Indo-China except Thailand, the only independent country which remained unconquered by any European powers. The Naga-inhabited hills were also certainly included into his scheme of conquest. He started to claim a few areas over the ill-defined boundary on the Manipur border where the Nagas lived. At one stage, Lord Ripon was provoked to send a military force there but his shrewd Secretary Lyall persuaded him to with-

draw his orders so that it would not assume serious proportions.¹ Yet his ambition was chopped off and defeated by war declared by the British and subsequent annexation of the Upper Burma into British Indian empire in 1885. The same year the Indian National Congress was founded and the annexation (of Upper Burma) was described by Pherozezshah Mehta as "unjust, unwise and immoral".

Afterwards, from 1885 to 1947, whatever substantial contacts between the Nagas and Burmese were of the border questions arising out of the British administration in the region before and after Burma was finally separated in 1937 from the Indian sub-continent. Going back in the early years of migration to their present territories, the Nagas and other tribes did not maintain, in the conventional sense of the term, their boundaries. It was the British administrators who undertook surveys, demarcated boundaries for their administrative purposes and strategy and carved a number of units like the Naga Hills, Mizo Hills, Khasi-Jaintia-Garo Hills, Chin Hills, Shan States, Kachin Hills, North Cachar and Mikir Hills, Chittagong Hills, etc. In this way, people classified as Nagas were placed in the Naga Hills in Assam, in Manipur and in Burma since they were weak to protest against the British for the divided rule. But the Nagas and other tribes in India and Burma continued their intercourses ignoring these boundary demarcations set up by the British government as we see in other chapters also.

Just after Indian independence, Nehru government was striving hard to maintain internal integration, development as well as to establish external contact and friendship without being unable to give adequate thought, finance and time to the unstable border areas between India, China, Pakistan and Burma. The Burmese government also had faced similar difficulties as both the countries had inherited almost similar tribal problems from the British rule.

On the Indian side, the Nagas, Kukis, Mizos, Khasis and some other tribes were reluctant to join the Indian Union in the beginning after the partition of the Indian sub-continent took place. The reasons of their apathy towards India were the British policy of exclusion of Naga areas from the mainstream of Indian life, discretionary powers given to the Governor regarding applicability of laws, the impact of Christianity, the difference between Hindunised Assamese Manipuri life and Christianised animistic Naga life and their fear of Hindu rule as once apprehended by Winston Churchill. In spite of their own efforts at creating a hill united state called

¹ See *General Branch A Proceedings*, March, 1880, No. 27-39 and *Political Proceedings*, No. 83, January, 1882.

Indo-Burman land, the idea receded quickly into thin air. The Garo-Khasis chose to remain in India whereas the extremist Nagas and Mizos stood swornly for independent states. The extremist Nagas chose independence of their fatherland by all means whereas the Mizos chose peaceful and democratic way without resorting to violence.

On the Burmese side, when the British left home in 1948, they created the Union of Burma with a loose confederation of tribal peoples but subsequently this Union was plagued by tribal chronic insurgencies and revolts for secession. Proceedingly, as a reward of the assistance given by the tribal people in Burma to the British government during the Second World War, a conference was called in February 1947 at Panglong, a hill town, attended by rulers and chiefs of Shans, Karens, Chins, Kachins, Mons, Was and Nagas who were fiercely anti-Burmans, to work out an agreement on unification with Burma in the recognition of their interests—state, army, language, independence. Again, in April 1947 the Anglo-Burmese treaty incorporated a provision to safeguard or reaffirm the desires of the tribal population. Then the Burmese constitution had to grant the Shan and Karen states the right of secession from Burma after 10 years of Union. But the communist forces in Burma which had also links with Manipuri communists led by the comrade Irabad, a great patriot of the Meiteis, gave rise to the question of Burmese territorial integrity. After General Bogyoke Aung San was murdered by U Saw men on July 19, the Burmese government refused the Karens, Shans and other tribes for separation from the Union of Burma. In 1949 when the Burmese government was putting down the murky rebellion of the Karens or Karennis fighting for freedom for their 4,500 sq. miles of Kayah state with their bases in China and Thailand, there was an invasion by General Li Mi's Koumingtang troops from Yunnan. The General got aid from Formosa and was in alliance with the Karen National Defence Organisation. But General Li Mi's forces evaded when the Burmese army drove the Koumingtang troops out. Under these circumstances, the eastern India and Burma remained chaotic and restive since the end of 1940s and in the early 1950s onwards.

However, the contrast between India and Burma was that the U Nu government was too weak to control and develop the hill tribes because it was itself struggling for stability ever since it won independence whereas the Indian government was strong enough to deal with the insurgent elements in the sense that the Indian activity was to cope with the remote eastern border areas known as

Tuengsang where the British administrative authority had failed to stretch out for many years. The development works on the Indian side were set into motion under the First Five Year Plan to eradicate poverty, ignorance, disease, and create a welfare state modelled on the pattern of the Soviet five year plans envisaged by Josep Stalin in the USSR after the Soviet Union was federalized by different nationalities.

The Indian Prime Minister, Pandit Nehru and the Burmese Prime Minister, U Nu visited Tuengsang area, Imphal and Kohima in 1953 to bring about an accord on the border areas particularly the Upper Chindwin and Somra tracts, where the Naga people like Tangkhul, Par, Kalyo Kengyu, Rangpan and Konyak had been in frequent contacts with the Singpho and Khampti tribes. But after their visit, the Nagas' revolt for an independent Nagaland took a violent turn, as we have already seen, since 1955, first from the Tuengsang area on the Burmese border as their base. The rebel Naga government put their efforts to contact the insurgent organized movements like the white Flag Communists of (late) Thakin Tan Hun, the Kachin Independent Army (KIA) of Shans, Karens and Kachins through their Eastern Naga Revolutionary Council which was formed by the Nagas in Burma. They were more or less simultaneously fighting against the Union of Burma for their independence. The fighting weapons soon became a great shortage for the rebel Nagas and they tried to get them from any quarters possible. Phizo had made some arrangement of arms supply from Pakistan. But the easy way to go to East Pakistan lay through the Burmese territory where the Naga and other hill people allied to the Nagas lived. Not only the use of Burmese territory for traffic to Pakistan but also the establishment of their base in the Somra tract apparently continued. The Burmese government, till early 1960s, did not intercept the Nagas moving through the Burmese territory on the understanding that only they should not disturb the Burmese law and order situation by their traffic.

But the situation changed abruptly; the Government of U Nu was suspended in March 1962 by the Revolutionary military junta led by General Ne Win.¹ The "Burmese Way of Socialism" was introduced and the immediate result was that about 3 lakh Indians who were controlling the Burmese economic produce were expropriated by nationalisation act in 1964 and forced out of Burma. But after this irritant problem was settled by mutual negotiations, friendly relations

¹ See Maung Maung, *Burma and General Ne Win*, Bombay, 1969.

between India and Burma were rapidly restored to and the two countries kept their interests abreast.

At the same time, the Burmese government came to know that Nagas in India were utilising the facility for social intercourse, to contact the Burmese rebels—although these contacts had not yielded much fruitful results because of the Burmese communists wished the Nagas to become communists which the Naga leaders refused since they did not have the background of communism except its one facet that it was opposed to organised religion in traditional sense of the term. On the other hand, the Government of India noticed that the Nagas used the Burmese territory for passage to East Pakistan for arms and military training, in violation of the accord under the auspices of Peace Mission, which forbade them from importing arms from abroad during the period of political negotiations.

The Indian Prime Minister, Lal Bahadur Shastri, visited Burma in 1965 in order to cement friendship, had discussions with General Ne Win, Chairman of the Burmese Revolutionary Council, on the mutual problems including that of the rebel Nagas. Feeling dangerous echoes of rebel movements to both countries, they came to the conclusion that the two countries should pinch into rebel forces and expeditiously take all possible steps in co-operation with each other to prevent any sinister attempts at secession or disintegration by fostering a sense of common nationhood among all the peoples within the territories called India and Burma. Accordingly, the Burmese and Indian troops propelled by the strategical marriage of the two countries under the same motives discovered the routes through which the Nagas slipped into East Pakistan and later to China and harried their troops to stop them. Sometimes, “fearing the nearest sword” in their saying, however harmless, the Burmese government forces killed and fought off the Nagas and warned them of dire consequences of using their territory against their friendly country India. At the same time, the question for demarcation became a matter of grave concern for India and Burma, partly because of the serious flared-up rebellions of Naga-Mizo people in India and of the Nagas, Chins, Kachins, Shans, Arakanese and Karens in Burma having links with Peking and partly because of the serious economic dangers from large scale smuggling.

In order to find a permanent settlement for the problem of this common ill-defined borders where these peripheral minority peoples are and to have a more rational frontiers, a boundary agreement was signed on 10 March 1967 by Colonel Kyi Maung on behalf of the Government of the Union of Burma and by K.M. Kannam-

pilly on behalf of the Indian government. The agreement stipulated a joint commission which would delineate, delimit and demarcate the boundary of 909 sq. miles between the two countries, with the preparations of boundary maps and drafting a boundary treaty, since the boundaries as they were before the independence became often contradictory and vague. It was also agreed that 385 kilometres of the boundary in the southern sector would be demarcated by March 1969 and that of the whole boundary about 1,474 kms or 909 sq miles long by 1973-74.

Here, for our purpose, we have to go a little more to the past: The India-Burma boundary runs from the south to the north extremity which is the tri-junction on the borders of India, China and Burma. This boundary line which passes through the densely forested hills, streams, trees and rivers with Nagaland, Manipur and Mizo Hills on Indian side and the Kachin state, Naga Hills and Chin Hills on the Burmese side was arbitrarily drawn by the British Company government under the treaty of Yundabo in 1826. Two years after the treaty, a Boundary Commission was appointed to fix the frontier, which it did without actual demarcation on the ground. However, this boundary, mostly imaginary line, was little known to the peoples of the borders who lived for centuries and even to those known the boundary was regarded as a clear injustice to them in the sense that the natives of the same stock or peoples like the Nagas, Mizos, Arakanese, etc. were divided into India and Burma, although British government agreed to let them travel freely 20 miles within the boundary line for what was described as social contacts. However, the people living on the boundary cared little and intercoured frequently by marriage and economic relations, etc. without the slightest thought of existence of the boundary. As such they never felt it necessary to go through the formalities of passport, visa, etc. the imposition of which, the British knew would invite wrath and revolt which they earnestly wished to avoid at all cost. The people on the Burmese side came to India for education, army, economy, religion, etc. as did the Indian hillmen in Burma. In 1885 Burma was completely conquered by the British and their authority was extended to the northern hills of Burma. In March 1895 the boundary question arose between Manipur and Burma and between Manipur and the Naga Hills in the wake of the Tangkhul Nagas' raid on Sahwpu near the Burmese outpost of Homalin in the Chindwin district. The British government abstained from interfering in the affairs of the tract on the assumption that they would act only when the tribesmen's attack upon the administrative area became a

threat to the security of the Government.

Again, the MacMohan Line agreement of 1914, more or less, adopted this boundary as far as the northern border was concerned with the British objective to ensure that the overland route between Burma and Assam via the Diphu pass was not affected and it was included inside the British line. No need was felt to adjust the the boundary, even in the 1930's when Burma was finally separated from India. Since the independence of India and of Burma, the Nagas, Mizos, Meiteis and other hill people in India and Kachins, Chins, Karens, Shans, Mons and Nagas comprising some 17 million out of 27 million population of Burma revolted against India and Burma.

Now they had used these jungle borders as their bases and for traffic to East Pakistan and China although the area had so far remarkably been free of tension due to the complacency shown by the Indian and Burmese authorities on both sides and partly because of the fact that the same groups of people lived on both sides of the frontier and crossed more often. The attempts of Pandit Nehru and U Nu in 1953 to find a common policy towards the Naga Hills Frontier tracts led to its prematurity and the outbreak of unrest among the Kuo Min Tang forces in northern Burma interrupted the coming point together¹. In 1962 the Chinese put a claim at a point several miles south of the Diphu pass with an intention to gain control of the western side of the pass with a view to use it as a strategic gateway into north-east India and north-west Burma. In order to control the movement of the insurgent groups and to have a clear-cut and protected international boundary between the two countries, the agreement of 1967 as stated above, came into being.

Even after the demarcation it had agreed that the tribal people living on the border line would be permitted to migrate unarmed restrictedly on either side of the border as before. In October 1967 the Burmese troops seized large quantities of Chinese arms and ammunition brought by an estimated 800 Nagas who went to China. Here again, China protested at General Ne Win's six day visit to India on 16-22 March 1968 for talks with Mrs. Indira Gandhi as a move for joint security measures against the various rebel people on both sides.² The two leaders agreed to exchange information and to co-ordinate their patrols in the Naga-Mizo areas on the India-Burma border. This almost sealed the fate of the Nagas in a stiffer line. But

¹ Tinker, H.R. *The Union of Burma*, London, 1961, p. 356.

² *Rangoon Daily*, Rangoon, March 31, 1968; and *Far Eastern Economic Review*, Hong Kong, October 31, 1968.

as estimated 200 Chinese trained Nagas were either killed or injured at the hands of Burmese security forces during several encounters in the Upper Burma since October 1968. Even in January 1969 the Burmese troops killed about 45 rebel Nagas in three fierce battles in the Upper Burma when the rebels led by General Mowu were trying to enter Nagaland with the assistance of the Kachin Independent Army (KIA) and when they (Nagas) resorted to looting and forcible collection of rations in the Kachin areas. As a result, hundreds of Burmese refugees from Kachin took shelter in Myikyina and further south.

At this stage, the Nagaland state government demanded that a representative body of Nagaland should be included in the joint Indo-Burma survey party and the move of the Burmese government to establish their authority over the physically undemarcated Naga-inhabited areas between Burma and Nagaland should be stopped immediately. Several members of the Nagaland legislative assembly called for the immediate merger of contiguous Naga-inhabited areas between Burma and Nagaland. Tingnei, one of the members of the Legislative Assembly said that over 100 Naga villages of Tuensang district of Nagaland were given to Burma in an imaginary line drawn up by the British government in 1935. Further, declaiming against the Government of India as a "silent spectator" to this unfairness, he said that the Government was trying to maintain happy relations with Burma at the cost of the Nagas and urged that no demarcation could be carried out in the adjoining areas without the consent of the people living there.¹

The Manipuris also put up their demand to return the Kabow valley with 7000 sq. miles, a part of Manipur given by the British government to Burma. The valley stretching from Sawbwa Yeshin valley in the Kale township, right across Tammu to Kontan village in the Homelin town is south-western portion of the Upper Chindwin. It was annexed to Burma when Marjit Singh (1812-19) was ruling Manipur as Burmese vassal. But after Gambhir Singh took it over as a part of his country in the First Anglo-Burmese War, the Burmese remonstrated the question of valley again with Colonel Burney, the British Agent and insisted upon him that all difficulties and disputes would cease if it was ceded to Burma. To have peace at the cost of Manipur and to serve the imperial interests, the British gave it to Burma on 8 January 1834 the day Gambhir Singh died of cholera, on agreement that the British would make the Manipuri

¹ *Indian Express*, New Delhi, December 13, 1970.

King an annual payment of Rs. 500 as a compensation for its loss.¹

Later on the rebel Nagas, Mizos, Meiteis, Kukis went to China to seek aid through the guidance of the Burmese rebels, who did not tentatively form an alliance against the Rangoon government. It was also reported that Jonathan, a young, well-educated Tangkhul Naga with a resolute and unshakable faith in the cause of Nagaland independence had taken the leadership of organising a joint liberation front of the Naga, Mizo, Meitei, Kachin, Shan, Karen, Chin and other peoples of India and of Burma under the overall behest of China. What shape he had given to his plan is yet to be seen. Even after the fall of East Pakistan, the underground Naga-Mizos went to Chittagong Hill tracts and Upper Burma particularly to Shan, Kachin, Arakan and Chin hills in the absence of any effective control of the Ne Win regime over these or to put so, for any other humanitarian reason as the Naga-Mizos in India have ethnical affiliations with those in Burma. These ties prove more palpable than political links. In Kachin the Burmese rebels reportedly have an airport under the aegis of China by which the rebel Kachin-Naga-Mizos use as transport for coming and going to China. Otherwise, generally it takes about 70 days to reach China from Nagaland on foot, crossing the Burmese greatest river, the Irrawaddy and its tributary the Chindwin which are formidable bars to communication. These people have also been equipped with transmitters and maintain radio links with the Chinese from Upper Burma.²

On the other hand, until recently, intercourse between the tribesmen in India and Burma has been frequent. The "sealing off" of the Indo-Burmese borders in joint agreement between Mrs. Gandhi and General Ne Win, has no much serious impact on normal communications between these people except for occasional interruptions by the Indian Customs on the hunt for Chinese-made goods flowing into India. The people on the Indian side used to join the Burmese army and send the money to their parents through unofficial channels; any Christian association held in Burma must be still represented by the Indian border Christians, and vice versa. Against the introduction of the Ne Win government the identity cards for every adult in the border areas, a number of Burmese people come still to

¹ Kabow is a Manipuri word which literally means Shan-Burmans who turned Manipuris out and occupied it. See *Secret Proceedings*, No. 1 and 77, March 18, and April 16, 1833, and *Secret Consultations*, No. 14-15, July 11, 1833, and No. 4-5; January 10, 1834, Dent, L. R. *Diary and Report of the Manipur Boundary Commission*, Rangoon, 1884.

² See also *Hindustan Times*, New Delhi, August 26, 1973.

India for education, business, etc. in one guise or the other. To add the matter complexity, the tribesmen on both sides of the border are keen to come together under a compact administrative unit, whatever may be difficulties on the way. Time and again, in spite of the Burmese socialism like nationalisation of shops and strict control on essential commodities, smuggling continues on the frontiers through the old Burma road and the Irrawaddy-Salween waterway along the Sino-Burmese border and the Stillwell and Tammu roads along the Indo-Burmese border; the latter is now a part of the Pan-Asian Highway running from Bangkok to Istanbul; Ledo Road where India, Burma and China meet is also another path used by the smugglers for their activities. Thus, the hill tribes in India and Burma intermingle brotherly with one another in this way or other and periodically challenge the New Delhi and Rangoon governments of Mrs. Indira Gandhi and of General Ne Win. However the Burmese Government also call the Nagas as "nationals" in relaxed mood.¹

PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF CHINA

What relations the Nagas had in the past with China grew from the fact that they (Nagas) trace their origin and migration from there. But it cannot be said with certainty when and why the Nagas migrated to their present-day mountainous homes. An ancient Naga legend says that after the Naga people originated from a lake somewhere, indicatedly in China, they spread to all directions, east, west, north and south. We may presume that the Nagas included in the early waves of migrants like Malays, Burmans, Shans, Thais, Laos, Indonesians, Vietnamese who came southwards from China. Yet, this kind of migration was as a matter of the expansion of the Mongolian race gradually in the bigger parts of the world as the available researches indicate as far as 20,000 B.C. Since Mongolia was a highly populated country, some went to Siberia and China when the southern Mongolia dried up and turned into Gobi desert. It can also be said that the hordes of migrants might have begun spreading out after the so-called sophisticated Chinese established their own civilization and maintained frontiers to indicate where their civilization ended and the territories inhabited by barbarians like the Tibetans, Mongolians, Manchurians and other wild people, whom the Chinese called the warring tribesmen began. The Chinese defended themselves with contempt against the threats of invasion from these

¹ *Forward*, Rangoon, VX No. 11, January 15, 1972, p.13.

tribes by maintaining a buffer belt across the Central Asia in which Chinese influence went short of direct administrative responsibility so as to receive warning of and thwart invasion in time before they would be attacked and by depending on the Great Wall, 1500 miles long, completed by Emperor Shih Huang-ti, (230-222 B.C.) of the Ch'in dynasty against keeping out the barbarians.

Unlike India, China had no contacts with the civilization of Arab and Mediterranean world before the Great Ashoka's mission brought Buddhism to China in 67 A.D. During the later centuries, from about the middle of the 4th century, the Indian Buddhist monks visited China, Korea, Cambodia, Siam (Thailand) Japan and Burma to preach Buddhism and many Chinese scholar-monks visited India as pilgrims to study Buddhist scriptures. At the same time, the Chinese emperors made a lot of efforts to establish friendly relations with their neighbours afar including Manipur, Assam, etc. through Tibet, the Naga-inhabited hills and Burma where communications were accessible. Sometimes, the Chinese used to come to Manipur as peace brigade with presents from their emperors and at other occasions, they came as invading troops.

But prior to these friendly or hostile visits, the famous Buddhist pilgrim scholar Hieun-Tsang¹ whose arduous journey on foot to the place of the Bodhi tree, visited Assam in 640 A.D. from Nalanda where the monastic university was crowded with thousands of students from various countries, and showed great desire to go back to China through the difficult hills of the Nagas. He was, however, prevented from taking such a big risk as the attitude of the Nagas to any stranger could not be predicted.

Then, the glorious centuries after, the classical Chinese civilization fell reluctantly to a great setback after Kabul Khan attacked the Kin Emperor Holo in 1135 A.D. and Genghis Khan, a cruel Mongol from Outer Mongolia entered victoriously into the heart of China in 1212 A.D. The task of complete conquest was accomplished by Kublai Khan whose ambition extended even to the Shan territory of Burma.² So the non-Chinese invaders—Mongols—conquered the parts of North China and set up dynasties, but later by the Manchus from 1644 to 1912 A.D.

In 1269 Marco Polo, a Venetian adventurer, reached China and unveiled her fabulous wealth and spoils. Then the western imperialists like Portugal, Spain, Germany, England, French, Holland, Russia, U.S.A. and Japan prowled and scrambled over China from the 16th

¹ Beal, S., *Life of Hieun Tsang*, London, 1888.

² Boulger, *A Short History of China*, London, pp. 47-60.

century onwards to 1949. Wars against foreign devils, revolutions of the Chinese people (Kuomintang) led by Dr. Sun Yat-sen against the depraved Manchu rule followed. Ultimately, Kuomintang Republic came into being in 1912 when the Chinese overturned the Manchu dynasty, rejected the "Mandate of Heaven" myth and replaced it with nationalism and democracy; but the country again passed into crises till 1949, the year the disciplined communists led by Mao Tse-tung, a librarian and professional trained revolutionary, with the active and overt support of the Soviet Stalin government emerged victorious, seized power and denounced the Kuomintang Chinese led by Chiang Kai-shek as rotten traitors and running dogs of the American imperialists, who had brought China to the brink of ruin, and forced them to take shelter in Formosa or Taiwan, an island held by Japan from 1895 to 1945. It is from this Taiwan that the 10 million Chiang Kai-shek nationalists till today dream of reconquering the mainland China while its image is integrating into mainland as the U.S.A. and Japan have declared it a part of China. The Communist government rejected Confucianism and nationalism, and replaced it with the orthodox Marxism-Leninism and declared that the Chinese People's Republic would wage "the war of liberation to the end" and liberate all the territories of China without specified reference to Tibet. The Communist China left Macao and Hong Kong to the Europeans. Macao, a small Portuguese province (acquired in 1557 at the southern tip of the Pearl river estuary near Canton) which was a centre of the world gold trade, was in early 1967 taken over by local communists while Hong Kong, being ceded to Britain in the 19th century, still remains with U.K. and is of economic value for the Chinese as a source of foreign exchange in a tacit understanding that it will grow into Chinese sovereignty not independence.

Since the Chinese communists established their totalitarian government in the foundation-stone of Marxism-Leninism, the Nehru government which too leaned towards democratic socialism, sympathised with the Chinese struggle for independence, democracy, peace, unity, prosperity and strength of China, hastened to acclaim the Mao government and offered a hand of warm friendship and recognition to China after the Soviet Union had done so. But the Chinese People's Republic engaged itself in a number of activities on different fronts in order to consolidate its position and to revive a communist empire on the lines of the Old Chinese empire. It immediately asserted its authority over Tibet, the Chinese suzerain state for years and took effective measures to integrate it by reforming Tibetans from the old-time obsolete social structure.

Again, the Chinese People's government encroached upon the Indian border regions for the first time since 1914. On one side, while they struggled to keep Manchuria and Sinkiang off from the Soviet sphere of influence, on the other side, a million-strong Chinese army fought for the cause of communism in the Korean war 1950-51. Meanwhile, the relations between China and India were freezing, as Jawaharlal Nehru was suspected by the Chinese as a British stooge. At last a warm breath came when a treaty to reaffirm the historic ties of friendship between India and China was signed in New Delhi on 29 April 1954 in which India recognized Tibet, the "forbidden land" as the Tibet region of China.¹ This treaty concerning trade and cultural relations between the two countries also enunciated the famous *Panchsheel* or Five Principles of peaceful co-existence basing upon the First five Commandments of Lord Buddha. This *Panchsheel* affirmed in mutual respect for each other's territorial integrity and sovereignty; mutual non-aggression; mutual non-interference in each other's internal affairs; equality and mutual benefit; and peaceful co-existence. The validity of these principles was reaffirmed by the Bandung Conference in 1955 which decided to keep Asia as a "peace zone" as envisaged by Pandit Nehru. Thereafter the Chinese dominion over Tibet was established completely.

Though India treated Tibet as such, since the Chinese suzerainty over Tibet dated from 1720 when Lhasa was occupied, but no attempt to administer the areas between the outer line and the Himalayan range was made until after the arrival of the Younghusband British Mission to Lhasa had given China the fear of losing Tibet. India protested officially against the cruel measures of the Chinese against Tibetans, without intervention in any way. The armed uprising of the Tibetans, particularly the Khampas in south-eastern Tibet, supported by Lhasa officials and other foreign forces from 1951-1959 was put down. The Dalai Lama, "All-Embracing Priest" or the spiritual and political ruler of Tibet took flight with 100,000 followers to India through the rugged border route of NEFA in March 1959 for sanctuary while 90,000 Tibetans were killed by the Chinese and Panchen Lama, the second spiritual leader, went to Peking and reportedly disappeared in 1967. The Tibetans were given refuge in India and other countries on humanitarian grounds after the International Commission of Jurists charged the Chinese of a planned genocide. This attitude of the Government of India towards rebel Tibetans evened the Chinese and ultimately resulted in their invasion of India in 1962. The desire of the Tibetan refugees in India to return to their homeland was recently matched by the Chinese castigation of Dalai Lama as "a reactionary and bandit leader". And the Tibetans' slogan in India for the liberation of Tibet has reportedly been showed by the Chinese Government by stationing about its 3 million troops with nuclear weapons in Tibet perhaps in the fear of the Soviet and Indian influence in the region.

Parts of Himalayas became the common frontier between India and China and any deal with Tibet meant China.

But in 1954, the Peking government brought out for the first time an old Kuomintang map showing the territories allegedly taken from China by the 'imperialist powers' between 1840 and 1919. In it were included all of the Russian Far East possessions in eastern Siberia, the Central Asian Soviet possessions, ringing Sinkiang, Afghanistan, the Pamir region near northern Kashmir, Outer Mongolia, all of North-East Frontier Agency in Assam Himalayas, Ladakh in eastern Kashmir, the so-called middle sector in Kumaon Himalayas, Nepal, Bhutan and Sikkim, whole of Assam including the present Nagaland, Manipur, Tripura, Meghalaya, part of East Pakistan, Korea, Vietnam, Laos, Cambodia, Burma, Thailand, Malaya, Singapore, the Andaman Islands in the Indian Ocean, the Sulu Archipelago of the Philippines, Okinawa, Taiwan and adjacent offshore islands.¹ These territories were identified as portions of China which would be reclaimed.

On 17 July 1954 China laid claim to Barahoti (We-ye) in U.P. as its territory. During his visit to China on 18-28 October, the Prime Minister Nehru raised the border question with crafty Chou En-lai, the Chinese Prime Minister, about the inclusion of some 50,000 sq. miles of Indian territory into their maps, as cartographical aggression, to which Chou replied that it was the reprint of China's old Kuomintang maps which would be duly revised. Nevertheless, while the arguments were going on, China as early as 1954 began to spread its fangs over the Aksai Chin (white stone desert) in the eastern Ladakh in Kashmir, while India was shouting hoarse about non-alignment, universal friendship and peace for mankind and supporting the Chinese entry into the UN. In gaining control of

¹ See Patterson, G.N., *Peking Versus Delhi*, London, 1963; Lamb, A., *The China-India Border: The Origins of the Disputed Boundaries*, London 1964; Eekelen, W., *Indian Foreign Policy and the Border Dispute with China*, Hague, 1964; Anon, Peking and Delhi, *The Times Literary Supplement*, January 2, 1964; Watson, F., *The Frontiers of China*, London, 1966. Dennis, J. Dolin, *Territorial Claims in the Sino-Soviet Conflict* and Liu Pei Hue, *A Short History of Modern China*. But in its September 1971 issue, *China Reconstruction* reduced China's land and sea boundaries with the help of a new map, excluding most of the territories included in 1954 but showing Aksai Chin, NEFA, Taiwan and islands in South China Sea up to Tsengum Reef (north of Sarawak, Malaysia) as part of China. Bhutan and Sikkim are shown as independent states and Kashmir as a disputed territory between India and Pakistan. No claim on Russian territories was made. See also, *Times of India*, October 2, 1971.

Tibet, a military road following an old track from Yarkand (in Sinkiang) to Takakot (western Tibet on Nepal frontier) across the Aksai Chin was completed in the autumn of 1957 that a small Indian reconnaissance parties did discover. A Chinese party came to Walong in the Lohit division of NEFA in October and the other Chinese soldiers arrested an Indian patrol party in the Aksai Chin area around the same time.

On 18 October 1958 India sent a strong protest note to China against the construction of a motor road across the eastern part of Ladakh. The Chinese personnel constructed outposts at Lapthal, and Sangchamalla in U.P. On November 3, the Peking reply said that the Indian patrol had intruded into Chinese territory, that had been ejected, made a clear and unequivocal claim to the Aksai Chin and put the view that the border between India and China had never been delimited, and as such there were map discrepancies and occasional disputes for which surveys and consultations were required. By then, China and India took up rigid positions on the border issue and armed clashes occurred sporadically. In 1959 the border question became quite explosive when Chou En-lai in the 23 February reply to Pandit Nehru contended that the Sino-Indian boundary had never been formally delimited; the McMahon Line of 1914 was absolutely unacceptable to China because it was an imperialist dictation repudiated by the Chinese; and the boundaries drawn on the Chinese maps were consistent with the earliest maps. The Chinese guarded the borders rigorously to prevent other Tibetan Lamas from escaping or returning with new supplies after Dalai Lama reached India with fabulous wealth in the form of gold which had been collected from the people in the name of God for the last so many centuries.

On 8 September 1959 the Chinese Premier, Chou En-lai distinctively claimed some 50,000 square miles of territory as Chinese which India called its own. This obdurate posture portended war between China and India. Longju, a forward post, 9000 ft in the Subansiri division of NEFA was seized by the Chinese who had withdrawn from it in November. A number of minor incidents also occurred several times between July 1959 and September 1962. In October (1959) India began to militarise its borders for the first time. On 7 November 1959 Chou En-lai proposed that both sides should withdraw their troops 20 kms from the McMahon Line and the line of existing control in the west so as to avoid incidents and subsequent talks between the two Prime Ministers, which India rejected so long as the Chinese were on Indian soil.

Meanwhile, the Peking propagandists raised a slogan to liberate Ladakh¹, Sikkim and Bhutan. Sikkim, a small Buddhist kingdom nestled in the eastern Himalayan mountains with an area of 2,745 square miles is another protectorate of India. It consists of 1,94,000 population, mainly Nepalese (75%), outnumbering the native Lepchas and Bhutias. Till the transfer of power in India in August 1947, Sikkim was under British paramountcy according to Anglo-Chinese convention of 1890, which recognised the British protectorate over Sikkim in the settlement of its boundary with Tibet, although the British interest in Sikkim began in 1814 when the British came to the rescue of Sikkim from the expansionist policy of Nepal. After independence, India inherited British responsibility in Sikkim under a treaty signed by the King Tashi Namgyal in Gangtok on 5 December 1950, and Sikkim continues to be a protectorate of India with special responsibility in respect of her defence, external relations and communications. In the wake of the revolt of the majority Nepalese against the divinely oriented rule of Chogyal, the Government of India took over the administration of Sikkim on March 1973 in accordance with the 1950 agreement and renewed its agreement, ensuring the protectorate of India, for the safety of royal Chogyal and citizens' participation of the political authority in the kingdom.

On the other hand, Bhutan, comprising 18,000 sq. miles and about 850,000 population (1970) is another Himalayan kingdom ruled by the Buddhist Bhutias of Tibetan origin of the ruling line. In 1774 the East India Company concluded a treaty with the ruler of Bhutan for friendship, but repeated outrages on British subjects committed by the Bhutanese hillmen led from time to time to punitive measures usually ending in the temporary or permanent annexation of various duars or sub-mountainous tracts with passes leading to the hills. Under a treaty signed in November 1865 the Bhutan government was granted an annual subsidy. By an amending treaty concluded in January 1910, the British government undertook to exercise no interference in the internal affairs of Bhutan. In turn, the Bhutan government agreed to be guided by the advice of the British government in its external relations. By a fresh treaty between India and Bhutan concluded on 8 August 1949, Thimpu has to be guided by the

¹ Chinese claim over Ladakh is based on the ground that since China had suzerainty in Tibet and that Tibet over Ladakh as its vassal, which India refuted as Maharaja Gulab Singh of Jammu conquered Ladakh and annexed it to his kingdom between 1834 and 1842.

Government of India in regard to its external relations, without any interference in its internal affairs. In 1951 the Government of India gave a subsidy of Rs. 500,000 and retroceded 32 sq. miles of the landstrip of Dewangiri in Kamrup (Assam) to Bhutan as a gesture of goodwill which was annexed to Assam in 1865.

Meanwhile, Peking took pains to negotiate the other borders, entered agreement with Burma in 1960 and with Nepal in 1961 and also demanded a Himalayan federation comprising Nepal, Bhutan, Sikkim and NEFA, the idea which India had strongly opposed ¹

The Indian and Chinese Prime Ministers met from 19-25 April 1960 in Delhi and agreed, among other things rejected, on meetings of official experts to collate all evidence on where the border lay. The armed Chinese moved into Taktsang Gonpa in the Kameng frontier division of NEFA. In the beginning of 1961, these experts produced contradictory reports and various acrimonious arguments in official letters, diplomatic notes and extensive reports referring to names of various places, to old treaties, old maps and more closely to religious and racial affinities. In May 1962 the declaration of China and Pakistan on border negotiations, the stretch in question lying in Kashmir resulting in the eventual border treaty (March 1963) on the line of the Macartney-MacDonald Proposal of 1899 infuriated India very much. On 8 September 1962 a Chinese detachment went across the McMahon Line into NEFA and established a position near an Indian outpost at Dhola, two miles south of the border. The Chinese immediately raised the bogey of 'an attack on China' when the Indian government ordered expulsion of the intruding Chinese. Once again, Peking demanded negotiations which New Delhi rebutted until the Chinese forces were withdrawn from Dhola.

All of a sudden, on 20 October 1962 the Chinese forces plunged full-scale into Aksai Chin in Ladakh and NEFA crossing McMahon Line at four points against the ill-equipped and unprepared Indian forces. At the time of this Chinese besiege in Ladakh, India deployed only an under-armed brigade to cover a border of 400 miles; the means of reinforcement to the battleground which soared at about 16,000 ft. were inadequate; roads were defective or even absent and supplies were carried across in hazardous air sorties. The Chinese

¹ From time to time, there used to be untenable proposal for a Himalayan confederation of Inner Asian states, possibly embracing not only Nepal, Bhutan and Sikkim but also Tibet, Kashmir, NEFA and Nagaland. See also Patterson, 'A Himalayan Confederation', *Far Eastern Economic Review*, May 6, 1965, p. 275.

troops using artillery and heavy mortars pounced on the Indian forces and destroyed them in Aksai Chin. In the east, in NEFA, China deployed an estimated 110,000 men and fought out the Indian troops largely in altitudes ranging from 14,000 to 17,000 ft. The Chinese employed all tricks and tactics similar to the Korean war and infiltrated into Assam plains near Tezpur through Se La Pass, Tawang, Walong and advanced into the plains of Assam, a rich Indian state which provides nearly one-third of India's export income on rice, tea, jute, oil, etc. On October 24, Chou En-lai proposed a three-point cease-fire offer to Nehru.¹ The Nehru government momentarily requested the United States for armed intervention and defence of the Indian territorial integrity which the US Kennedy government accepted and began to threaten China. But the Chinese on November 21 unilaterally declared a cease-fire along the entire length of the boundary and withdrew beyond the disputed areas mostly perhaps at the threat of U.S., U.K. and Soviet Russia. The defeat of the Indian forces was mainly because of their unpreparedness, as she was dreaming of an idealistic peace, unaware of the movements of the Chinese, 'yellow peril'. V.K. Krishna Menon was removed from defence ministership on October 31 for his wrong assessment of the Chinese policy which led to India's military debacle.² The Chinese assault aroused a furious indignation in India, a threat to its security and an experience that in power politics there are no permanent friends and no permanent enemies. From then on, the NEFA hitherto neglected comparatively by the British and free Assam government had now for the first time attracted interest and attention of the outside world.

In the course of fighting, the Naga Federal government in a letter to the Chinese government protested that the Federal Nagaland would not recognise any agreement on the frontier between India and China near about 96°E and that the Nagas did not consider political ideology as important as ethnical factors and racial affiliation and would on racial grounds rather be a part of China than of India. Knowing the sympathy and support of almost all the Western countries including the USSR except, of course, Albania and some Arab countries, for India against the Chinese aggression, Phizo at a press conference in London on 15 November 1962 offered to the Indian government the services of about 40,000 underground Naga guerrillas to organise resistance against the Chinese if India agreed to grant the Naga demand of independence once the conflict

¹ *White Paper VIII*: Chou En-lai to Nehru, October 24, 1962, p. 1.

² See Kaul, B.M., *The Untold Story*, New Delhi, 1967.

was over.¹

Earlier on 21 January 1962 Phizo made a statement which showed that the Nagas had become disappointed at the lack of moral support from the West and might seek Chinese aid as they hoped that China would not be 'unreasonable' about Naga independence. After claiming that "we are with the West", he declared "there is real danger that our young men at home, deprived of senior leadership may decide to throw their lot with the Chinese." He also said that he would go to the United Nations to lodge a complaint against the 'Indian aggression'.

But the Indian government kept its mind cool and replied that it was for Phizo "to call upon the dissident Nagas to join Nagaland state and to co-operate with that state in repelling the Chinese". At the same time, Shilu, the Nagaland Chief Minister, in a speech on 27 October 1962, appealed to the rebels to abandon their struggle for freedom and to join in the defence of their country against the Chinese attack. His appeal had an appreciable effect. Hundreds of young Nagas joined the national volunteer force and went to the front to throw back the aggressors. Many of the moderate rebel Nagas also surrendered. On the other hand, the underground forces too seized the opportunity to rebuild their government without causing any disadvantage to India and increased their strength after the Indian troops' withdrawal from Nagaland to the sensitive borders. The Naga People's Convention set up a committee to devise means of approaching the remaining rebel Nagas to persuade them to join the defence efforts against intruders in their country. The Nagaland government were ready to offer a general amnesty to the rebels provided they would give a guarantee of good behaviour and promise to abandon violence and fighting.

Thereafter the Chinese friendship shifted to Pakistan, an unusual marriage between the two, ostensibly for considerations of political expediency. Both Pakistan and China encouraged the Nagas to go on fighting against India for their freedom which the Nagas had been demanding for years without hatred or ill-will towards India but as a fundamental human right only, wanting to live as a Naga nation. The Nagas soon realised that Pakistan's moral support backed by insufficient second-rate military aid, which became an open secret to outside world too, was not going to take them far in their journey towards their goal. Besides, after the Indo-Pakistan war in 1965, the Nagas came to know that Pakistan could not face the eventful situation if the Indian forces would march

¹ *New York Times*, November 16, 1962.

into East Pakistan. All the same, they did not leave Pakistan once for all even though they moved a bit adrift. But with the passage of time, the trek to Pakistan became a very difficult and risky adventure as the Indian and the Burmese troops scrupulously guarded their passages. By this time, the Pakistanis too advised the Nagas and Mizos to go to Mao China for help.

Now the Nagas turned towards the Chinese as the leaders of the Mongolian race when the inconclusive political negotiations were going on in New Delhi between the Prime Minister, Mrs. Indira Gandhi and the rebel leaders. The Nagas foresaw that the Government of India was not going to consider the Naga sovereignty since it assumed that every inch of territory governed or claimed by the King-Emperor George VI as Indian had become, save Pakistan, an inalienable part and parcel of independent Republic of India. Moreover, lying in a vital strategic region of India, China and Burma, an independent Nagaland would become a hotbed of big power intrigues as it could not stand alone and also pose a danger to the security of India. What India wanted was an honourable place for Nagaland within the framework of the Indian constitution, even greater autonomy than the Nagaland state.

But the rebels who held the independence demand by their teeth, surely thought to strengthen their military and political position during the cease-fire and negotiations period to increase their bargaining capacity. After toying with the fear of Chinese involvement, at a meeting of the Tatar Hoho or Parliament in 1967 the Naga underground government decided to send some men to China through northern Burma in search of military and political aid to resume against India their fight for freedom. Prior to this, the Nagas had not deemed it necessary to turn to China partly because they knew the India-China 'Bhai-Bhai' relations in the early 1950s for which the Chinese would not dare to spoil the Sino-Indian friendship for the cause of Nagaland which they considered an internal problem of India and partly because of their illusion that China may have grabbed their land and criminalized their people, although the Chinese support to subversive rebel forces in Burma, Thailand and Indo-China appeared clear to the Nagas, perhaps to regain their past glory in order to save China from the humiliations suffered at the imperialist hands, to restore the past dominating position of China in Asia and to reassert its role as a powerful nation in international politics that had been dominated by USA and USSR. Moreover, the Nagas had a great illusory faith that their Christian brethren countries particularly USA, UK and others would do some-

thing for them and the Marxism-Leninism was supposed to be inimical to the Christian tenets of life that the Nagas had become accustomed to, without realization of the pragmatic difficulties inherent in Christianity in the real materialistic life of man.

Again, the cherished hope of the Nagas to obtain support from the UN and the Western countries had all but faded away. The break-down of the negotiations with the Indian government and the change in the underground leadership became imminent. At this critical juncture, the Phizoite Nagas, however, uncongenial to Marxism-Leninism, decided altogether to turn to China for political, military and economic help in order to achieve independence. In this way, they fell into the overt support for subversive, rebellious ideas and activities of China in various parts of the world. Yet, it will be in place to know that China too had got its share of problems with the tribals whom they call 'minorities', particularly Khampas, Miaos, Yaos, Chuangs, Yis and the like.¹ Particularly, Miao and Yao tribes are often classified together, living as they do on the mountains of Kweichow and Yunnan in the west of Hunan, Kwangtung and Kwangsi in the Central-south and Thailand, used to revolt whenever the Chinese government became weak or oppressive.

Accordingly, in early January 1967, in violation of the virtual truce, and throwing the glaring differences of political, economic and cultural ideas and institutions between the Nagas and Chinese, Brigadier Thinusillie and Muiva, the Secretary of the Naga National Council, designated as 'Ambassador Plenipotentiary of the NFG' along with about 300 underground Nagas were sent to the southern Chinese province of Yunnan after crossing the Burmese territory under the guidance and assistance of the Burmese Nagas, Kachins, Shans and Karens who were also receiving the Chinese support against the Burmese government.² Active in the Upper Burma, adjacent to the Chinese province of Yunnan was the Eastern Naga Revolutionary Movement in close liaison with the pro-Peking wings of the Kachin Independence Army and the White Flags (Peking-oriented Burmese Communist Party). Earlier no substantial ties between the rebel Nagas and Communist Chinese had been established, even at least one report of Chinese arms appeared in the Press.³

¹ See George V.H. Moseley III, *The Consolidation of the South China Frontier*, London, 1973.

² Naga rebels and China, *China Report* : V. 3, No. 4; June-July, 1967, p. 11.

³ *New York Times*, September 21, 1957.

Indoctrinated as he was in Phizo's political philosophy of sovereign Nagaland, Muiva, a young Tangkhul Naga walked into the jungle with steadfast determination to join the underground movement after passing M.A. degree from Gauhati University, Assam. On reaching China, the Muiva-led Nagas were received with a red carpet welcome and placed in the military training camps, particularly at Eu-kung about 10 miles north of Teng Chung and their leaders were taken from place to place even other neighbouring Communist countries for political talks and training, despite violence and factionalism in Yunnan itself, caused by the Cultural Revolution monitored by Chairman Mao Tse-tung to eliminate bourgeois ideology, behaviour and society as well as to bring about socialist mentality of the people. The Naga leaders told the Chinese government that they were fighting for their freedom and wanted help from China to accomplish this end. They did not say that they would adopt communism, as this was, for the moment forbidden by the Naga underground government in the fear of Christian public reaction, as the Nagas had been adamant against it because communism was said to be opposed to Christianity. The Chinese government had reportedly assured the underground Nagas of its support, asked them to come in thousands of young and educated persons having unshaken conviction in the ideal of Nagaland's sovereignty for training, arms and ammunition and to co-ordinate their activities with the Meiteis in Manipur, Mizos in Assam and East Pakistan (now Bangladesh) and Chins, Shans, Kachins and Karens in Burma¹ The Nagas were further assured not to fear interference in their religion because of the plain fact that Chinese government allows "freedom of religious belief," according to Article 88 of their People's Republican Constitution. Here the Chinese perhaps tried to accept Christianity as the expression of the Nagas and change it into a credo wholly acceptable to Marxist thinking which would make it into something that would mean no Christianity at all. In any case, for the first time, a great power became openly secretly involved in the Naga issue. The Soviet Russian sources claimed that the Chinese personnel were taking part in Nagas' guerilla movement.²

But the move to go to China had the concurrence only of the Phizoites. Some Nagas within the underground government, the church and the state government became vehemently hostile and

¹ Patterson, G. N., 'Delhi and the Nagas', *Far Eastern Economic Review*, Hongkong, October 31, 1968, p. 240.

Moscow Radio, July 21, 1967.

critical of the moves to involve red China in their movement and viewed with alarm in speculation as to what the consequences of the Chinese implication would be. Rather the Nagas like those in Burma had been riven by factionalism, usually caused by rivalry for power and by a group wishing to turn to Peking for support and by the other group to settle the problem with India amicably. Later on, its unity inevitably underwent considerable strain and the split looked inevitable.

On 17-18 January 1968, at a conference of the Naga National Council, the resolution for the adoption of communism as a means to secure wider co-operation of the Chinese was defeated by an overwhelming majority within the rank and file of the underground Nagas. Even among the Phizoites, some were reluctant however responsive to the money and arms given to them by the Chinese. A. Kevichusa, a well-known intermediary leader between the underground and the Nagaland government, and a believer in parliamentary democracy, in human freedom, happiness and progress, pointed out vibrantly the dangerous implications of seeking Chinese help and guidance in his overlaid view and warned the Nagas of the "total ruin", like the Vietnamese if they ever committed themselves to communism.

Brigadier Thinusillie and some other Nagas returned from China in small groups and reportedly told the underground leaders that the Chinese would openly support the cause of Naga freedom and render arms and other assistance; the government in exile would be based at a suitable point in the Chinese territory contiguous to the Indian border; the Chinese would guide the foreign relations of the government in exile, and they would help in other ways too, such as setting up a rebel radio station and permitting use of their propaganda machinery.¹ In February 1968, the General, Mowu and Isaac Swu, the Foreign Minister in the Federal government accompanied by a force of several hundred men went to Yunnan by the same route and told their willingness to accept Chinese proposals as their official policy.

But this was vehemently opposed by considerable sections of the moderate underground; its Dikhu unit was reported to have withdrawn its support from Mhiasieu on 27 March 1968, the Tuensang unit on April 14, and the Sema tribe on April 22. General Kaito who was removed by the Federal government from defence ministership for his first initiative to go to China, opposition to cease-

¹ *Hindustan Times* and *Times of India*, New Delhi, July 18, 1968.

fire and his broad idea of the Nagaland organisation covering Manipur and Assam for the attainment of independence and for preference of military considerations to decide political issues functioned an "Army Government" at the beginning of April, which he had already set up on 1 January 1968 and made their camps near the Indian army camps. His Army government adopted an extremely rigid attitude towards the Phizoites, laboured to overthrow it and go to China for overall communism in Nagaland, opposed the excessive collection of money and foodstuffs from the poor villagers by the Phizoite groups, stood for a peaceful settlement of the Naga problem with Indian government and promised to prevent the re-entry of the Chinese-trained Nagas into Nagaland in disguise. In this way, his followers were getting a great strength to build up its organisation supported by the Indian army, with clandestine aim, however, stuck to peace and order. This rivalry within the underground resulted in clash of interests on fundamental issues, with each side incapable of understanding the attitudes and modes of operation of the other.

At the same time, special precautions were taken by the Indian security forces to prevent the return of Nagas armed with and trained by the Chinese. The army was reported to have seized the underground regional headquarters at Tolloi in Ukhrul, Manipur on 1 February 1968, and an exchange of fire took place between the security forces and 200 Nagas in the Kohima district on March 9, in which one Naga was killed. Reporting on this incident in the Lok Sabha on March 20, the Prime Minister, Mrs. Gandhi said that the Chinese-trained guerrillas could be prevented by sealing the border only gradually. General Ne Win, the Chairman of the Burmese Revolutionary Council, visited New Delhi on March 16-22 for talks with Mrs. Gandhi, although no details of the talks were published, but they were believed to have been concerned with measures to curb the movement to China of tribal insurgents of both the countries. Mrs. Gandhi said in the Lok Sabha on April 3, that there was no question of any joint action by India and Burma for sealing their borders, but "we are making every effort to seal the border on our side and they are doing the same on theirs". The Indian official sources claimed on May 2 that patrolling along the border had been so intensified that no one had been able to slip through in the past two months. Under all these circumstances, the Chinese influence and temptation promoted no major efforts to build up centres of local support, even if Naga problem had raised a political merit of high importance.

For the first time, a joint conference of representatives of Naga underground government, the Peace Observers' team, the Indian government, the Nagaland state government was held at Dimapur on 20 April 1968. At the conference, both sides gave an assurance that they would honour the terms of the cease-fire agreement. When the representatives of the state government sought to raise the question of the import of arms from abroad, the underground delegation however contended that this matter was covered by their assurance and refused to discuss the issue further. At the underground delegation's request, it was agreed that the Peace Observers' team should raise with the Indian authorities the question of the establishment of a peace centre for those areas of Manipur covered by the cease-fire and the restoration of the status quo in these areas. Khugato Sukhai, the former underground prime minister warranted the Nagas' action in seeking Chinese help and said that India won freedom after the Second World War with the support of the outside world. If that was right for India, he did not see how it was wrong for the Nagas to seek support from the other countries. "India", he added, "is getting military equipment, war materials, aircraft and huge quantities of food from the outside world. Shall the Nagas sit tight and allow themselves to be crushed by the Indians with an army equipped with foreign arms? Let it be known to all that the Nagas have every right to seek outside support in their political struggle against India...Some years ago, our people sent Phizo to the west to explain to the entire world the struggle of the Naga people. The situation in the world is changing very fast and we feel that a similar mission should be sent out to all neighbouring countries like Burma, China, Japan, the Philippines and Indonesia...Indians say that China is a communist country and it is dangerous to have any truck with her. Is not India trying to make herself a socialist country? Socialism is the first preparatory stage towards communism. Can we then avoid communism from India?"¹

The establishment of contact between the Phizoites and the Chinese had never properly materialised due partly to a number of serious clashes between the rebels returning from China and the Indian army patrols in May and June 1968 after variously estimated between 1,000 to 4,000 Naga Mizos, having received military training and political indoctrination in China, and partly because of situation within Nagaland was rapidly deteriorating with increased fighting

¹ *Amrita Bazar Patrika*, Calcutta, May 24, 1968.

among the rebel Nagas coupled with the discontent of the public with Phizoites for its misuse of power and oppression of the people. According to official sources over 200 Nagas had been killed in a series of encounters with the Security force while trying to cross into Burma; no details of casualties among the Indian forces were given.

The heaviest fight in Nagaland since cease-fire erupted on 7 June 1968, when the Indian troops, after a three-hour bombardment uncovered and stormed a Naga encampment at Jotsoma, eight miles from Kohima. The camp reported to be both a strategic army post and a guerrilla centre of the underground, with about 50 Chinese trained Nagas as instructors, was situated on a 6,000 ft. high mountain surrounded by dense jungles, only a mile away from the Indian army's divisional headquarters, was so well concealed in its build-up from land and air observation that it had been functioning with the apparent aim of smoothing their activities for several months without being discovered. The Indian government sources stated that the Nagas, numbering about 200, had suffered heavy casualties in the fierce day-long engagement in which they had used mortars, medium and light machine-gun, automatic rifles of Chinese make, and short-range rockets of Pakistani origin. Indian army casualties in the action were variously given at about 90 men. The 25 Nagas together with some Chinese weapons consisting many items of arms and ammunition, including AK-47 automatic rifles, Soviet-made 7-62 SKS carbines, US-made carbines dating from Korea, and medium-machine guns, 60 mm rocket launchers and 60 mm mortars and grenades and quantities of medical supplies and clinical equipment used in military operation, were captured in the battle. Important documents containing notes on the handling of semi-automatic rifles, telecommunications, Mao Tse-tung's principles of guerrilla warfare, communism, general political knowledge and other entries in the books, however, which were strongly Christian in tone, suggesting that the Chinese had been careful not to offend the Naga's religious susceptibilities, were also seized.

Some of the writings in their diaries and notebooks are quite interesting to be reproduced here: "We do not want war, but war, can only be abolished through war, and in order to get rid of the gun, it is necessary to take up the gun. War is the highest form of struggle for resolving contradictions when they have developed to a certain stage between classes, nations, states or political groups and it has existed ever since the emergence of private property and of

classes. Every communist must grasp the truth: 'Political power comes out of the barrel of gun.' (Mao's *Little Red Book*, p. 74); The enemy advances, we retreat; the enemy camps, we harass; the enemy tires, we attack; the enemy retreats, we pursue.

"We go to China asking for help and after getting necessary help, we will come back to Nagaland and we will wipe out all our enemies from our land and we hope one day we will be free... There are two winds in the world today, the east wind and the West wind. There is a Chinese saying, 'either the East wind prevails over the West wind, or West wind prevails over the East wind'. ... It is characteristic of the situation today that the East wind is prevailing over the West wind. That is to say, the forces of socialism have become overwhelmingly superior to the forces of imperialism... Marriage is a lottery in which men stake their liberty and women their happiness. Marriage has many pains but celibacy has no pleasure. It is better for a women to marry a man who loves her than a man she loves."

On 14-15 June 1968, the Peace Observer's team working in an atmosphere of rising tension held an emergency meeting and issued a statement in which it was stated that "the Peace Observers' group have seen the arms, ammunition and equipment of Chinese origin and we also perused diaries and notebooks relating to military training and political indoctrination of Naga army personnel in China that were recovered in the recent clash. These show that Federal men have returned from China after military training and with arms and, therefore, have infringed the terms of the cease-fire agreement, in this respect. The Peace Observers' team wish to point out that if the peace period is used to strengthen militarily in preparation for an eventual showdown, then peace loses all its meaning. The peace period, we would suggest, should rather be utilised for taking various political initiatives to solve the problem peacefully on a mutually acceptable basis." Further, the team pointed out that the cease-fire agreement prohibited the Naga Federal side the import of arms from abroad as well as jungle operations and raids on Federal camps by the Indian security forces, and added that both these terms had been violated in the recent incident. Subsequently, the team had received letters of protest from both sides about the Jotsoma incident, and that it would inquire into the matter, as there was a difference of opinion as to which side opened fire first.

In fact, the finding of Jotsoma incident confirmed irrefutably the vestige of Chinese stand in favour of the Nagas and forced India to warn the communist China for vituperous propaganda and sub-

versive activities against India through its press and radio and of actively promoting subversive elements in north-eastern India¹ in forms of training and the supply of arms and money to the rebel forces. The Government of India took it as a form of hidden external intervention if not an open hostility and animosity and lodged a strong protest against China, through the Chinese *Charge d'affaires* in New Delhi on 19 June 1968. The text of the protest note handed over by Manjit Singh, Director of the East Asia Division of the Ministry of External Affairs stated as follows: "For some time the propaganda organs of the Chinese government have been engaged in a malicious campaign against the Government and the people of India. One of the unmistakable aims of these vituperative outpourings has been to undermine the unity and territorial integrity of India. With this objective in view, Radio Peking and the NCNA have sought to incite a small group of subversive elements in north-eastern India and have brazenly encouraged them to undertake 'armed struggle' against the legally constituted authority of the Government of India. This insidious propaganda offensive has sought to throw an ideological smoke screen through grotesque distortion of facts by talking about 'large scale armed struggle' in India and ever projected it as a 'class struggle.' Along with the hostile intentions of the Chinese government, manifested in this manner, there has also been growing evidence of the Chinese government's active hand in promoting subversion.

"The Government of India have concrete and irrefutable proof that arms and other equipment, manufactured in the People's Republic of China, have been surreptitiously smuggled into Indian territory with the clear purpose of aiding some subversive elements in Nagaland. In an encounter on the 7 June 1968, Indian authorities captured many items of arms, etc. of Chinese manufacture. A band of subversive elements in Nagaland. Automatic rifles, mortars, mortar bombs and quantities of medical supplies and other equipment used in military operations, were seized. At this, photographs, diaries and other documents provide convincing evidence of Chinese government's complicity in the otherwise aiding these subversive elements. It is obvious that material could not have found its way into India without the assistance and encouragement of the Chinese government, confirmed by the documents which were captured. The subversive elements had been taken clandestinely

¹ See *The Economist*, London, June 15, 1968; *The Times*, London, and *The New Statesman*, London, August 23, 1968.

Republic of China and have since then returned to carry on their activities with guidance from the same source. Thus, there is conclusive evidence of the Chinese government's masterminding this covert scheme in order to stir lawlessness against the legally constituted authority in India.

"In the face of incontrovertible evidence of Chinese government's complicity in abetting subversive elements in Nagaland, her profession of adherence to the five principles of peaceful co-existence, which was claimed only recently by a senior Chinese leader, are to say the least hypocritical. The sinister designs which the Chinese government harbours against their neighbours and the extent to which they are interfering in the internal affairs of their neighbours in utter disregard of all norms of international behaviour and in repudiation of the Bandung declaration on the promotion of world peace and co-operation is abundantly clear to the whole world. It is quite extraordinary that even after the disclosure of the evidence of Chinese government's complicity in fomenting trouble in Nagaland, the Chinese propaganda organs unabashedly continue to persist in their sinister design.

"Needless to say that the authorities of the Government of India responsible for law and order will deal with all such subversive activities in a firm and resolute manner. Such futile attempts on the part of the Chinese government to stage an anti-Indian farce with a small group of misguided elements will inevitably end in an ignominious failure.

"The Government of India take a very serious view of such interference which is in flagrant violation of all canons of international behaviour and an affront to India's sovereignty. The Government of India, therefore, strongly protest against the conduct of the Chinese government and would like to make it clear that they will not tolerate interference of any kind in India's internal affairs. The Chinese government are warned that they will be entirely responsible for the consequences of their interference in the internal affairs of India."

While the Chinese government kept studiously eloquent silence to the protest note of India, Peking Radio broadcast that "neither armed suppression nor political deception can curb the development of the armed struggle of the Nagas, Mizos and Kukis." And it further added that "their cause is a just one..."

Despite the tension on the border, created by the Chinese-trained Nagas going and coming, the cease-fire was being extended from month to month. Meanwhile, the political leadership of the Federal

government of Nagaland was nearly doomed to destruction within themselves. At the other extreme, the relations between General Kaito and the Phizoites had become increasingly tense in the summer of 1968, however, they were, in effect, all on the same end. General Zeheto was abducted by the 'Army government' in the process of coup d'etat against the Federal government on June 9, but released on June 25 in return for a promise of co-operation against Phizoites. The first bloodshed between the two factions of the underground occurred on June 21, when five of the General Kaito's men including their leader Losü Nipuni, a young patriotic man killed by the so-called Phizoites under instigation of some local political leaders who had been at personal enmity with him than the cause of independence at a hill side, near Tadubi (Thefü) village, Mao area. While his men running away for life, from their derisive camp, the enemies transfixed Nipuni with their bullets and swords and he died an instantly miserable death. However, it was stated afterwards that Nipuni had totally neglected all precautions, disbelieving utterly the possibility of the other group's venturing surreptitiously to take up such foolish and suicidal step which bade ill for the Nagas.

Hardly two months had passed when General Kaito, too, was shot dead by an unidentified assassin at dusk while he was walking through the heart of a Kohima street for shopping on 4 August 1968. His dead body was flown by an Indian Air Force helicopter to his native village for internment. The actual assassin could not be caught though this distasteful act was attributed to the Phizoites. But it was reported that Kaito's assassin was killed by Indian army and identified as an Angami rebel captain.¹

General Kaito, a genial man slight of build, wiry, agile with keen eyes, in his early thirties, was the Commander-in-Chief of the Naga federal government from 1956 to 1963 and had built up the rebel Nagas into well-disciplined units which engaged against superior Government armed forces for years. He was later promoted to be the Defence Minister. He fell out inevitably with the narrow underground leadership and worked for a broader Naga independent state, for which he was branded as a traitor to the Federal government, however patriot of his people and removed in 1964 from the defence ministership in the Federal government. But the death of General Kaito precipitated his rickety Army government.

Very soon, President Mhiasieu and Ramyo were found fault

¹ Anthony Polsky, *Far Eastern Economic Review*, October 31, 1968, p. 240 and November 27, 1969, p. 461.

and kidnapped by the Khugato Sukhai faction from Federal government's headquarters at Chedema in October 1968. Public opinion in Nagaland was for speedy peace in the state. The rebel Nagas who were away from the scene desperately needed respite to heal their wounds. General Mowu and his men were looking out for a chance to enter into Nagaland despite tight sealing of the borders by India and Burma. On 2 December 1968 the Indian security forces destroyed another underground camp at Mezoma after an hour-long exchange of fire after which the rebels fled into the thick jungle leaving behind large quantities of Chinese-made arms and ammunition. This was the second big fight between the Nagas and security forces.

The seesaw of the results of general election in the early February 1969 and the setback to the Chinese-trained Nagas caused deep disappointment to General Mowu and his men for the villages in which Phizoites had been previously dominant, had participated in the elections and voted for the NNO Party. The establishment of new centres of underground authority by General Kaito's faction opposing Phizoite leadership cut off Gen. Mowu and his supporters from their vital organisational support in Nagaland and put them in a sad plight. Moreover, harrying by Indian and Burmese troops had made traffic and trek with China increasingly dangerous. Worse still, their stay in China was liable to put their integrity in shadow. These developments and Burmese pressure on Gen. Mowu's column forced him to sneak back into Nagaland and tried to come to terms with the Zungti group—Kaitos' followers. The latter were not ready to talk with General Mowu as long as revengeful bloods were boiling in them and his men would come to Zungti with arms. However, the General and his 200 men entered into Nagaland with a twinge of conscience on 26 February 1969 and were caught by the Assam Rifles Unit of the security forces with some Chinese weapons and documents on March 16 while attempting to move to a secret jungle camp in Tuensang area dominated by the Zungti group. General Mowu was immediately flown in an IAF plane to New Delhi for interrogation by Army Intelligence. Before he was captured, the Zungti group sent a message to him that he and his men could re-enter Nagaland if they allowed themselves to be unarmed. General Mowu sent some thousands of rupees and arms to Zungti group to lure with a cryptic remark before his surrender took place.

The interception and capture of General Mowu and his men were masterminded adroitly by the skilful management of Major General N.C. Rawlley, GOC, under the direct supervision of Lt. General

Manekshaw, GOC-in-Chief, Eastern Command, with the help of the Kaito faction for which they (Kaito men) were alleged as the beguiled Judas or sworn traitors within their own house. Quite apart from the support of Kaito faction, General Rawlley could possibly handle the situation alone as he had immense strategy, knowledge and varied experiences on the north-eastern Himalayan border areas and peoples since he fought in the battle of Kohima in the World War II in 1944 and won Military Cross for his gallantry in the war. But this was a great feat of the military force which shattered the rebellious build-up entirely.

General Mowu, a fifty-one year old shrewd man hailing from the Khonoma village in Nagaland, had a chequered political career in the underground set-up. Deeply inspired by Phizoism, he joined underground after he passed Intermediate Examination. In 1957 he was arrested at Damcherra in the North Cachar hills of Assam while he was returning from East Pakistan and was released from captivity in 1958. Then he rejoined the underground and held various higher army positions and led the rebel Nagas to East Pakistan through Burma a number of times. In 1962 he accompanied General Kaito, to London on a political mission. On returning from there, he built up his position, became underground Commander-in-Chief and took some harsh measures for the underground government for which he earned the displeasure and hatred of some of his colleagues and people who were later responsible for his arrest, although the Chinese gave the reasons as "the lack of strong party organisation, failure to build up a powerful mass base, ignorance of military affairs, thinking on old lines, a formal attitude towards the establishment of political power and the work of revolutionary land reforms." General Mowu was detained still in Nowgong jail for using his power detrimental to the interest of his people during the tenure of office as the army chief, in a period of unscrupulous intrigues and bitter bloody feuds and for his fighting against the *de jure* Government of Nagaland and India, even after unsuccessful defence against the charges put up in the Supreme Court of India in 1970. But in picking the brains, he revealed inhibitedly the conditions put forward by the Chinese government upon the Nagas for the help, such as the submission of the Nagas to the Chinese government under some political arrangement and participating in fighting wars against its enemy countries. Such Chinese peremptory demands, General Mowu said, were beyond his imagination. In all, the capture of General Mowu was an ignominious defeat of the Phizoites, and a premonition of the failure of his mission. After-

wards, the Nagas in Nagaland heard broadcasting programmes from clandestine radio station reportedly operating in Chinese territory in Manipuri and some Naga dialects which spoke the gospels of Mao inciting the people to resort to violence against the Indian government for the victory of their just demand. Later on, on 11 April 1969 Dusoi and sixty-six other Nagas were handed over by the Burmese to the Indian army authorities at Moreh on the Indo-Burmese border, 66 miles from Imphal after they were arrested from the jungles of the Upper Burma.

From China, some of the Nagas were sent to North Vietnam to study for themselves on the spot as to how the brave Communist Vietnamese were fighting the American imperialists and their lackeys—South Vietnamese—under the revolutionary leadership of Dr. Ho Chi Minh in a war that was projected as one between communism and capitalism as represented by Americans on one side and Sino-Russians on the other. When the Nagas were in Hanoi, the North Vietnamese government committing to “all the peoples on the earth are equal from birth, all the peoples have a right to live, to be happy and free,” promised them to extend whatever possible help within their ability passively or actively for the liberation of the Nagas from the reactionary Indian government. “The Naga People,” a Hanoi official publication captioned, “The U.S. Imperialists—propaganda about their criminal activities in Vietnam must not be believed”—issued by the Foreign Languages Publishing House in 1967, said, “have benefited from the techniques of the Lao Dong party (the ruling party of the North Vietnam) and learned from the experience of the Vietnamese struggle for independence. They have received instruction in the techniques of sabotage, ambush, assassination and lightning raid. Naga leaders, during recent fraternal discussions in Hanoi, have expressed their thanks for the technical advice and guidance given to them in their fight against the reactionary Indian government by the heroes of the People’s Army of North Vietnam.” Forecasting doom for the so-called reactionary regimes in South Vietnam, Laos, Thailand, Malaysia and Singapore, the paper condemned Mrs. Indira Gandhi’s government and the Indian National Congress as “reactionary and self-seeking clique siding with the American bandits” and warned, “in certain areas of India which are physically favourable to the methods which have proved successful in Vietnam, patriots are now striking blows for liberation.” The Hanoi mission in New Delhi had on a previous occasion denied newspaper reports which said a rebel Naga band led by General Mowu had visited Hanoi at the invitation of the North

Vietnamese government. Then, the Chinese called the rebel Naga-Mizos as "nationalists" who were waging guerilla warfare against the "reactionary Indian troops and police" for their "national liberation."¹

However, the other communist countries including the Soviet Union, the great friend of India, did not have any separate policy towards the independence movement of the Nagas from India, even though the rebel Nagas put a dubious claim that all the communist countries, in case of Nagas' fraternity to communism, would support them fully despite the Soviet Union's ideological difference and border dispute with China as each alleged the other as revisionist or social imperialist and as orthodox Marxist. Perhaps, the rebel Nagas might have secret contacts with the Russians or exaggerated or implied otherwise the Russian support from the speech of Leonid Ilyich Brezhnev, General-Secretary of the Soviet Communist Party, on the *Fiftieth Anniversary of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics*, in Moscow on 21 December 1972: "As we see it, it is the purpose and mission of our foreign policy to help all the peoples to exercise their inalienable rights and, above all, their right to independent and sovereign development, so that they may benefit from the fruits of modern civilisation."

"As we see it, the purpose and mission of our policy on the international scene is to side unfailingly with those who are fighting imperialism and all forms of exploitation and oppression, for freedom and human dignity, for democracy and socialism." This was not all. Soviet Union promised India firmly not to interfere in her internal affairs and to stand by India in "trial, test and triumph."² In its issue, the Soviet journal, *Azia-i-Africa-Segedny* (*Asia and Africa Today*), Far-East analyst, S. Leonidov, accused China of having colonialist designs in Asia, especially the Indian sub-continent, practising the age-old technique of "divide and rule" and sending its agents to adjoining countries. He further pointed out that within India "the Nagas' uprising and Naxalbari armed revolt were aided and abetted by the Chinese clandestinely."³ Again the capture of Chinese-made weapons by the Indian government troops from the rebel Nagas was widely reported in Moscow, supporting the Soviet charges against Peking of crude interference in the affairs of neighbouring countries.⁴

¹ *Peking Radio*, July 9, and September 27, 1970.

² *Times of India*, November 28, 1973.

³ See *Hindustan Times*, New Delhi, February 12, 1973.

⁴ *Indian Express*, New Delhi, April 19, 1973.

But on an earlier occasion, the Moscow Radio in March 1969 ridiculed Peking's support to the Nagas by imparting Mao guerilla training in China and by providing arms and ammunition, even to the extent of monetary help. "British imperialism," it said, "wanted to exploit the Naga movement for independence to further its policy of divide and rule with a view to undermining the unity of the Indian people. Now Peking has picked up the thread where the British imperialists left off." Again, accusing the Chinese of aiding and encouraging the "anti-government separatist elements in north-eastern India...In particular, the self-styled Federal government of Nagas, a clandestine organisation in Nagaland state", the *Soviet New Times* in March 1973 (No. 10) linked the reported visits of some Americans to the north-eastern border areas with the assumed activities of "subversive and separatist groups". On other day, discovering the Chinese design of expansion, *Pravda*, on August 26 (1973) accused the Chinese leadership of striking to create a Peking-dominated military and political alignment of several South-East Asian states. It has further added: "The Maoists use base methods for the attainment of their hegemonic aims in those countries: from subversive activities and forming of pro-Maoist groups to support of separatist tendencies in the countries which Peking would like to make a tool of its foreign policy. Peking's line consists in trying to prevent stabilization of the revolutionary-democratic forces in India, Burma and Sri Lanka; in trying to create an unstable situation in South-East and South Asia to be able to fish in troubled waters in pursuit of their aims." The Soviet news agency, *Novosti*, in an article charged China with hatching up plans with separatist elements to dismember India "to suit hegemonistic ambitions of the Chinese leadership." Referring to underground Nagas, the paper says that 'the Maoists continue to inspire armed anti-government activities in Nagaland through Peking-trained Nagas'.¹

On 15 January 1974 *The People's Daily* in an article said that the Soviet leaders have never helped others without their own interest in view and blasted that the "Soviet revisionists are carrying out plunder and exploitation" in India in the name of rendering aid. It was not an attack against Indian leaders but an apparent warning to India that the Russian aid was not without strings attached.²

After the rebel Nagas' surrender to the Indian forces in Bangladesh, the *New China News Agency* in its despatch datelined 19 January 1972, stepped up its interest and trumpeted: "The Naga

¹ See also *Times of India*, January 16, 1974.

² *Indian Express*, January 17, 1974.

People's armed forces who have for a long time waged a prolonged armed struggle in Nagaland and also in Assam, have increased their activities in recent weeks." On the other hand, the underground Nagas circulated printed leaflets in various languages stating that Phizo had made "an agreement with China which would invade Nagaland soon to liberate the people from the clutches of the foreigners," and urged the people "to have patience in their struggle for freedom".¹

Of late, China has reportedly encouraged the Naga, Mizo, Shan, Kachin and Karen rebels to form a federal state including the Chittagong hill tracts of Bangladesh and given them money and arms. For the purpose, several military camps have been maintained in Yunnan province and Burma for military training and indoctrination of communism.² But in as much as any one, as a matter of conjecture, is clearly obtuse to ascertain all of Chinese complex foreign policy objectives towards the Indo-China, it looms large and gives a ghost-hunt in the minds of the people there whether such small intervention should take the form of a full-scale military invasion of the Chinese accompanied by rebel Naga-Mizos if the Chinese do not go off at a tangent from the present policy. In spite of this threat and a desire to live in peace with secure frontiers the Indian armed forces are prepared impregnably enough to face any aggression from any quarter. There is also an acute awareness in the Indian minds of the extremist Naga-Mizos' trek with the Chinese on the formidable strategic borders. For all, in the foreseeable future, China may not embroil itself in such wild adventurism due to her geographical and material limitations, even if it remains curiously difficult to be certain what Chinese external intentions would be overtly and covertly. Yet things which underlie occult remain to be watched in the mirror of reason and reality and not prejudices, preoccupations and misgivings since the Chinese-trained Naga-Mizos' move with the Chinese has been an act to be followed by reverberations throughout the north-eastern Naga, Mizo, Meitei and their allied inhabited areas up to Chittagong, its hill tracts and Burma.

¹ *Hindu*, Madras, October 10, 1972.

² *Indian Express*, New Delhi, February 4, 1974.

Nagas Today

"Everything in the world is in motion...
Life changes, productive forces grow, old
relations collapse."

—Karl Marx

Now, if we ask ourselves as to what are the Nagas today after twenty-six years of Indian independence, the answer would be that tremendous changes in their physical as well as mental outlook have taken place as never before. Over a relatively short period, they are rolling in education, revolution, legislation, urbanisation, industrialization and travel, altering the traditional patterns of Naga life for better but less, perhaps, than may be expected by radical thinkers.

The Nagaland state government formed by the Naga Nationalist Organisation in February 1969 elections of the 52 Legislative Assembly (Vidhan Sabha) seats functioned effectively under the considerably normal conditions and stability in civilian life. In March 1971 General elections, for the only one Nagaland seat in the Lok Sabha, Kevichusa supported by the underground Nagas was elected, defeating Chubatoshi Jamir, former Union Deputy Minister and the Nationalist Party nominee who later on joined the United Front with 14 others for political considerations. In April 1973 the number of seats in the Legislative Assembly was increased by Delimitation Commission from 52 to 60 on the basis of 1971 Census.

The general elections to the 60 seats of the Legislative Assembly of Nagaland state in February 1974, were a tough contest between the Naga Nationalist Organisation, the United Democratic Front and Independents under the threat and ambushes—killing as many as 20 soldiers and civilians including a Deputy Commissioner and Extra Assistant Commissioner and injuring 24 in 19 incidents between February 6 and 16, by the underground Nagas as elections were as alleged by them "illegal and farce" and "it is none of our affairs" as circulated by Muiva, General Secretary of the outlawed Naga National Council. And the United Democratic Front joined later by seven Independents and one NNO, came into power. This turn brought the new Delhi's protege—the NNO, "shored up by the Ministry of Home Affairs as good boys against Phizo's bad ones"¹ into political

¹ *Economic and Political Weekly*, New Delhi, March 9, 1974. p. 375.

uncertainty. After having the Hokieshe government and Legislative Assembly formally dissolved by L. P. Singh, Governor of North Eastern States on February 24, the Democratic Front Ministry headed by Tsukru Vizol, who is a simple, well-meaning and variedly experienced patriot but a close associate of Phizo and underground movement, was formed on February 26, at the Raj Bhavan, after unequivocal assurance was given by the UDF leaders to the Governor, of loyalty to the Constitution and integrity of India, for maintaining peace and order and protection of all citizens irrespective of political affiliations and preferences in the state.

On the same day, in a broadcast over All India Radio, Kohima, the Chief Minister Vizol said that his ministry would make an honest attempt to create a climate of peace and goodwill to remove the needless fear of violence in Nagaland. Calling upon the NNO and officials to support and extend goodwill of his administration and paying respect to all those who lost their dear lives in the faithful discharge of duties, the Chief Minister said that "my administration shall work to heal the wounds and therefore vengeance is unthinkable." It obviously extends reconciliation of all people and overlooks tribal loyalties and administrative corruption which played a part in eroding the popular base of the NNO during a decade of their tenure of office.¹

Then, Khymo (Lotha) against Dr. S. Liegise was elected to the only one seat of Nagaland in the Rajya Sabha in the biennial election on 21 March 1974. Again, Scato Swu, the revolutionary but surrendered Prime Minister was also nominated by the President, V.V. Giri as a member of the the Rajya Sabha on April 1. However, among the other things, there are still vexed problems to be solved by the Central government, such as to establish the stable boundaries between Assam and Nagaland and other contiguous neighbours, to achieve a political unity by unification of all the Nagas and to search for permanent political settlement with the extremist rebel Nagas, etc. almost shared by the NNO as well as the UDF.

First of all, it is better to take up one of the problems that has plagued the Nagas for years, concerning the determination of Nagas' boundaries as well as the related questions of what people properly belong to Nagaland. At present as well in the past, we know the boundary disputes assume a substantial subject of importance in relations between Nagaland, Assam, Manipur, NEFA and

¹ See *Link*, New Delhi, March 17, 1974, p. 9 and *National Herald*, April 27, 1974.

Burma. But following the creation of Nagaland state, this question became now and again, irritant. Many of the disputes were directly or indirectly inherited from the British rule when the traditional boundaries between them had been passed over or altered to administrative, strategic, economic and intrinsic gains or insufficiently explored. Thereon the fervent desire of the Nagas today is to bring the disintegrated territories back to themselves whether they bear an economic asset or ethnical affinity or a geo-political vantage. In ancient times the boundary disputes also had been one of the causes of head-hunting wars among Nagas or raids on the neighbour plains. The British found that the geo-political divisions in the area were far from clearly delimited and were just vast tracts of doubtful boundaries. What they did for the boundaries was first to encourage Manipur, Cachar and Assam to extent their political reins of government into the Naga areas so as to contain the Naga raids on the British-protected plains. Later on the British administrators divided the Naga territories into Manipur, Assam and Burma for "administrative convenience" disregarding their feelings and consent, when the Nagas were too weak and divided that they proved incapable of resisting such British imperial acts.

Today Nagaland claims an area of more than 1,200 square miles of Assam, excluding the North Cachar and Mikir hills lying on its border with Nagaland, of which about 700 sq. miles are Reserved forests, not being recognized as the *de facto* boundary of the 1925 Notification which Assam strongly defends it as a natural boundary while Nagaland rejects it as something artificial and unjust. The conflict of claims has led to a war of words and continuing tensions occasionally bursting into pitched battles between the two states.

Historically, prior to the Ahom invasion of Assam in 1228, the Nagas had established the rights of the jhum or shifting cultivation on the stretches of their hills for miles and miles together and below in the plains as well, which in those days were either unclaimed or no man's land. Having founded their kingdom in the Upper Assam, the Ahoms appropriated this land to themselves and the Nagas thereafter raised boundaries by the soil embankment on each side, some of which still survive in certain places, and in the other cases by placing stone pillars or stressing on the streams, rivers or hills which were observed as sacrosanct for centuries.

Then the boundary questions arose when Assam was subjugated by the British in 1826 and the Naga Hills was constituted in 1866 by excluding quite a large chunk of Naga areas, disregarding the traditional Assam-Nagaland boundary, for administrative and economic

interests particularly tea and oil in Assam. Consequently, what was in fact, the administrative lines became the territorial limits. Again, in between 1866 and 1925, the Naga territories were chopped off a number of times in accordance with administrative orders and they thus went on shrinking in size. Frequent disputes resulting in violence on the payment of compensation to the Nagas for the tea planters' encroachment on the Naga forests forced the British government to introduce the so-called "Inner Line" regulations in 1873. But this did not solve the basic issue of the border question between the Naga areas and Assam. In 1898 the Mikir and Rengma hills were transferred to Assam when the Deputy Commissioner of the Naga Hills found it difficult to extend his jurisdiction over the plains far hill areas of the district. Once again, under a notification issued on 9 December 1898, a large tracts of the Naga Hills were placed in Nowgong and Sibsagar of Assam. In 1902 the question of a clear definition and redrawing of the border was taken up. As a result, a fresh notification slightly changing the earlier decision of 1898 was issued in 1903. In 1918 Manipur occupied a considerable tracts of the eastern Naga Hills down to the western limit of the Somra tract in Burma in order to put down the Kuki rebellion, and ultimately this area was included in Manipur in 1923.

The boundary issue between Assam and the Naga Hills flared up once again and was settled by the notification of 25 November 1925 issued under the signature of G.T. Lloyd, Second Secretary to the Government of Assam. According to this notification, the border between the two started from the junction of the Dhansiri river with Dikhu river at the trijunction of the Mikir Hills district, Sibsagar and Naga Hills on the west, and stretched over a length of about 200 miles to the trijunction of Sibsagar district, Tripura district, NEFA and Naga Hills on Teok river to the east. It further defined the boundary in the Burmese and Manipur sectors also. The rest of the boundary was demarcated from time to time after regular surveys. In 1927 a small area east of the Mokokchung lying between the Chichung and Chimei rivers was included in the Naga Hills at the request of the six villages. Dimapur was transferred to the Naga Hills district by a notification on 18 November 1930. The Nagas had repeatedly asked the British government for the return of those deprived areas to be incorporated into the Naga Hills even before they left India.

After India became free, the Naga nationalist movement was chiefly concerned with the question of their own independence from India than anything else. However, the Nagas showed great resent-

ment of the 1925 boundary and at some places the boundary pillars raised after the 1951-54 surveys were removed, claiming that Naga areas extended ten miles beyond the point where the boundary was shown by pillars. Thereafter they frequently encroached upon the forested and other areas as their own, among which rebel Nagas made their hide-outs. Simultaneously, the Inner Line regulations were also extended by the Nagaland government to their claimed areas. The destruction of valuable forests and timber, cases of indiscrimination, arson, intimidation of the Assamese villagers were reported, but measures and counter-measures were taken by the two governments. In 1964 the Nagaland legislative assembly adopted an unanimous resolution to set up a boundary commission. Shilu, the Chief Minister of Nagaland himself sought Prime Minister's personal intervention into the matter. Assam too started the eviction operations against the Naga occupants in March 1965 causing great hardships to the latter, whereupon the Chief Ministers of Assam and Nagaland agreed to maintain status quo till the border issue was settled peacefully. There had been a series of high-level abortive conferences and meetings between the chief secretaries of Assam and Nagaland in 1963, 1966, 1967, 1968, as also in 1969 between the two Chief Ministers. These meetings failed to break the long-standing impasse. As agreed to in the Chief Secretaries' Conferences, the Survey of India started the work of boundary demarcation in February 1969. The Naga villagers obstructed the survey and the Nagaland government openly expressed its reservation regarding survey operations which were then abruptly suspended. Assam and Nagaland governments had set up their police posts and checkposts deploying about 2,500 policemen equipped with modern weapons. These police forces sometimes came to blows on the disputed border areas.

Assam has maintained that the 25 November 1925 notification on the boundary gives natural and well-defined boundary between the two states as it was clearly demarcated in most parts by stone cairns. This was also incorporated into the Constitutional Amendment Act in the formation of Nagaland. Only a small part of the boundary that remains without delimitation along the areas where the pillars disappeared or were removed by the Nagas, could be settled with the help of survey team. If any other alternative to the Naga demand has to be accommodated, it would have to be on the basis of "some adjustments of territory, exchange of some villages" as suggested by the Centre. On this basis Assam has refused the appointment of a boundary commission to examine afresh the whole boundary

question as demanded by Nagaland because it will entail complete revision of the boundaries and involve possible loss of her grip on what it had gained by 1925 notification. It is, Assam holds, a case of encroachments that disturb the law and order of a state than one of scoring political points.

The Nagaland stand is quite naturally the opposite. The 1925 notification, Nagaland holds, was a demarcation of boundaries undertaken by the British government to serve its own imperial and economic interests at the cost of weak Nagas at the time, without ascertaining their will and without respecting their age-old traditional boundary between the Ahoms and Nagas. In other words, the notification, introduced for administrative and financial convenience only, as the Government aptly put, was an act of imposition meant to carve out boundary again and humiliate the Nagas. Therefore, Nagaland now demands only those areas alienated and removed by the British government, not laying any illegal and unreasonable claims upon the Assamese territory. Second, the agreement between the Nagas and the Government of India in 1962 provided for the return of the Naga areas to Nagaland. Not only this, the Naga deputations were told a number of times that the border problem could be raised once Nagaland came into being on the basis of well-known constitutional principles. Finally, Nagaland government has pointed out that the Assam government has not raised any objections when the survey was going on for the Tuli paper and pulp factory at Amguri on Mokokchung road side which Nagaland took to be in its territory. Therefore, for the good of all concerned, Nagaland appealed fairly to the Centre to establish a boundary commission.

Taking into account the views of the two governments, the Government of India appointed Sundaram Commission to resolve this ticklish problem and find a solution acceptable both to Assam and Nagaland and whose report is still awaited. On 2 May 1972 the state governments of Nagaland and Assam, at the intervention of the Central government signed an agreement to maintain peace along the borders between the two states. To make the solution much more hard, as lately as 1972 Assam has laid claim to Dimapur as its territory since the Kacharis built their capital there before they were turned out by the Ahoms. On the other hand, Meghalaya (the abode of clouds) was created for Garo-Khasis; The North Cachar-Mikir Hills and the 18 lakh Bengali-speaking Cachar district sought their own separate identity, and the former moved even to merge with Nagaland. NEFA and Mizo Hills district known as Arunachal Pradesh (Land of Sunrise) and Mizoram became union territories

along with the formation of Tripura and Manipur as states; some 65,000 Garos in Kamrup and Goalpara districts of Assam comprising Sibsagar, Dibrugarh and Lakhimpur demanded to merge with Meghalaya; the three million Ahoms in Upper Assam began to strive for Ahom homeland and 12 lakh plains tribal people demanded the union territory or state called Udayachal (The Land of Sunrise) in the predominantly tribal tracts of Goalpara, Kamrup, Darrang, Lakhimpur and Sibsagar districts of Assam due to crises of language, education, economic backwardness and unemployment. Mizoram has put claim on the Mizo-inhabited parts of Assam, Tripura and Manipur.

All these have been politically sundered, allied to enigmatic relations between the tribal people, the Assamese and Bengalis. On the whole, the north-east of India has been still passing through a period of balkanisation, transition and adjustment in their history, during which revolt, demand for concession, discomfiture, disturbance, turmoil, violence and tension prevail in the atmosphere where the highlanders as well as lowlanders are groping to find solution to their basic political interests in preference to economic initiatives. Despite all these factors, the Government of India emphasise more the need for integrated economic development of the entire region through the North-Eastern Council monitored by the Planning Commission as an answer to the separatist political movements and other problems particularly arisen from their economic neglect and backwardness, rather than further vivisection of the north-eastern territory in the present context. And the Government also prefer a 'moratorium' on inter-state boundary disputes.

Quite relatively connected with the boundary problem, there is the movement for the unification of all the Nagas living in Nagaland, Manipur, Assam, Arunachal Pradesh (NEFA) and Burma. Of course, this question also originated when the British government unilaterally divided the Naga-inhabited hills into Manipur, Assam and Burma, with a vile motive of dividing them so that they might not be able to put a united revolt against the British. This act of division was done at a time when the Nagas were too weak, enervated and disunited to assert their will and power.

We have seen earlier that the British did not know much about the Nagas in the beginning and had no intention to rule over them. However, Manipur and Assam continued to suffer frequently from raids of the Nagas as before. The British were reluctantly drawn into confrontation with the Nagas for the protection of the Manipuris and Assamese from the Naga raids. First of all, the British Company

government encouraged Gambhir Singh, the King of Manipur, to subdue the Nagas and extend his rule over them if he could. Enthralled by this elusive promise, Gambhir Singh accepted the vicarious responsibility, fought them and claimed his authority up to Kohima. Having come to know of his intentions to rule them permanently, and also of the suspicion of the fact that his strong and powerful kingdom might pose a substantial threat to the British paramountcy of the region itself, this policy was stopped at once and the control of the Nagas also was taken in their own hands. And it was no longer, by and large, possible for Manipur to have any political deal with the Nagas. Yet, in order to appease Manipur, the Company government incorporated the Mao, Tangkhul and Tame-nghlong Naga areas into Manipur in 1842 whereas the Angami areas were placed in Assam, after which the Naga Hills was created as a district of Assam in 1886. In 1862 the British government demarcated the boundary between Burma and Manipur to prevent conflicts between the two when the Burmese were able to support some Kukis, whom they sent with the intention of annoying Manipur, to settle down on the lands claimed by Manipur, from where they raided often on and enslaved the Naga tributaries. In this demarcation some were placed in Manipur and the other in Burma. On 26 September 1923, Digar Mouza was annexed to the North Cachar Hills from the Naga Hills on the plea that it was easily inaccessible from Kohima and was easier to be ruled from Haflong. Thus, administrative division of the Naga sovereign village-states into Assam, Manipur and Burma was done by the British in the pursuance of their divide and rule policy to undermine Naga unity as Lord Curzon did in the case of Bengal by partitioning it with the purpose to destroy the unity and strength of the most politically conscious Bengali people in India. As a measure of this British policy, the beginnings of the Nagas' unity were largely lost, the boundary question between the Nagaland and Manipur, Assam and Burma as well as a movement for unification of all the Nagas arose now and then and are continuing till today.

Before the sovereignty was transferred to India and Burma, the British did not make any arrangement towards the unification of the Nagas into one administrative unit while the Naga National Council was going on demanding a sovereign Nagaland state comprising all the Naga-inhabited hills of Assam, Manipur and Burma. On 12 April 1947 the NNC made their demands in some of the resolutions which stated that the Britain should make "necessary arrangements with the Government of Assam for immediate establishment

of the forest department in the Naga Hills, and see that the reserve forest of the Naga Hills which is at present under the control of the Sibsagar forest department will be transferred to the Naga Hills... to protest against the move initiated by the External Department, Government of India, for lifting the Chin hills and the Eastern Bengal Frontier regulations...and against the measures taken by the Government of Assam to include the Konyak Nagas of the Wakching area in the Tirap Frontier tract...stands for the unification and solidarity of all the Naga tribes, and therefore any measure that goes against it should be abandoned at once by the Government and to demand that portion of the North Cachar Hills where the majority of the inhabitants are Nagas, be included in the Naga Hills." The Akbar Hydari agreement of 1947 (Clause 6) also affirmed to bring under one unified administrative unit, as far as possible, all Nagas and all the Naga areas so included, should be within the scope of the proposed agreement.

At the same time, the Naga leaders in Manipur were also making efforts to integrate particularly the Naga areas of Mao, Ukhrul, Tamenglong, Sadar Hills, Tengnoupal and Churachandpur sub-divisions of Manipur, with an area of 7,938 sq. miles or so and a population of about three lakhs; and in general, the other areas of Assam and Burma, into the Naga Hills of Assam. But they could not raise the issue to the common cause of all the Naga people when the Manipur government began to function in accordance with the Manipur constitution drafted in May 1947, in which it was stated that "the principle of equality and freedom as applied to all without discrimination of caste, creed and race shall include the right of any section of the hill people to secede at the end of the five year period, should conditions within the constitution not be satisfactory." A simple educated Tangkhul Naga, namely R. Khathing¹, who served as Lieutenant in the Assam Regiment in the Second World War and was responsible for killing a number of Japanese invaders for which he won the M.C. from the British government was appointed Minister for Hill administration of Manipur. But the Mao Nagas living compact in the exact contiguous Naga Hills, who were considered Angamis before the Manipur boundary was delineated in 1841-42, were sullenly resentful to the political arrangement of Manipur, and launched in acts of no-tax campaign against Manipur government under the leadership of Athikho Daiho and his comrade Ngakhai Modoe (N. Modoli), so as to integrate the

¹ After working as the Chief Secretary of Nagaland, Khathing is now the Indian Ambassador to Burma.

Naga hills of Manipur into the Naga Hills of Assam as of paramount importance for political and geographical unity in order to rise from a position where they had been down-trodden and repeatedly beaten by the outsiders for centuries for lack of unity among themselves. The Manipur government took severe action against the revolting people, in which three persons were killed, some thirteen others wounded and their leaders—A. Daiho and N. Modoli—were arrested and jailed on 27 August 1948 under Regulation 111 of 1818.¹ But after Manipur was integrated into the Union of India on 15 October 1949, the Assam Governor, Sri Prakash, the successor of Sir Akbar Hydari, came to rescue and released them, and the Government of India paid Rs. 20,000 to the families of the deceased and the wounded. Then the movement had become evanescent if not died down, more quickly than was expected.

The Nagas kept up their demand with the Government of India in 1953 and 1955 regarding the dire necessity of unification of all the Nagas that Prime Minister Nehru gave an assurance that the way should be prepared to bring all the areas inhabited by the Nagas in the Naga Hills, in Manipur, in the North Cachar and Mikir Hills, in the districts of Nowgong and Sibsagar and in Burma, into one integrated state. Once and again, the Naga leaders of the Naga Hills and Tuensang Unit (since 1957) brought up the matter before the Government of India when they entered into an agreement with the latter in 1960, for the formation of a Nagaland state, although the Naga leaders, particularly Dr Imkongliba, obviously because of a constricted outlook, did not wish seriously the contiguous Nagas to join the new state and share the benefits of statehood. Yet fearing the threat of the underground leaders who were fighting for all the Nagas in Assam, Manipur and Burma, the Naga Convention leaders pressed the Government of India to place the cause of the integration of all other Naga-inhabited areas on record of the agreement, which the Government did. Afterwards, the Nagas in Nagaland and Manipur worked ceaselessly to persuade the other Nagas to join Nagaland. The Nagaland state government made a formal representation to the Union government on 10 October 1967, demanding that Ukhrul, Mao, Tamenglong and Tengnoupal areas of Manipur inhabited by about 250,000 Nagas should be merged with Nagaland. The Naga Nationalist Organization passed a resolution in February 1968 in which it stated that the Government of India should immediately integrate all contiguous Naga areas with the

¹ See *Sardar Patel's Correspondence 1954-60*, ed. by Durga Das, V. 8, Ahmedabad 1973, pp. 517-19.

Nagaland state as per agreement between the leaders and the Government of India in 1960.

The Naga Integration Committee of Manipur headed by Athikho Daiho¹, the former Finance Minister of Manipur, and Rishang Keishing², an ex-member of Indian parliament, in co-operation with the Nagaland state government, made their efforts to the cause with varying degrees of success. The Government of India expressed their willingness to implement the agreement as soon as the situation in the region returned to normalcy. On 28 August 1968 Mrs. Indira Gandhi told the Parliament that the Naga-populated areas of Manipur were still in a disturbed state and it would not be right to look into the question of a merger until there was peace with the Naga and Mizo rebels. The Nagaland state government was reported to have issued secret instructions to the officials in the border outposts to keep in touch with the Burmese Nagas across the border as the Nagaland state Deputy Minister of Medical and Public Health, Hanso strongly urged the Government of India to take up with the Burmese government the question of returning to India the areas inhabited by the Khemnugans and other Nagas in the wake of their decision for merger of the area with its counterpart in India.

However, the Government of India has made separate administrative arrangement for the Naga and Kuki hill people within Manipur under the second Assam Reorganisation Act of 1971, whose elections for the six autonomous Hill District Councils having 108 seats were held in May 1973. At the same time, Yamaso Shaiza,³ a noble Tangkhul Naga leader clamoured that unification of the Nagas in Manipur with Nagaland would better follow with the Meities (Manipuris) also as both the former and latter are ethnically the same except different religious practices. But the United Democratic Front government strongly stand up for the unification of all Nagas as per their election manifesto placed before the people.

Yet it seems, at present, that the unification of all the Nagas, including Nagas bestriding in the Indo-Burmese frontier under one administration has a hurdle, for it raises international issue with

1 Daiho left the Naga Integration, joined the Congress and was a member and Congress leader of Legislative Assembly of Manipur in 1972-73.

2 Keishing left the Socialist Party of India, joined the Congress but was turned out by the local Congress for his Naga integration activities, but again joined Congress. He is now a Congress member of the Legislative Assembly of Manipur

3 He was the Finance Minister in the Alimuddin ministry (1972-73) in Manipur, and is now the leader of the Manipur Hill Union in the Legislative Assembly of the State.

Burma. This can possibly be done without gambit if the Indian and the Burmese governments have a will to do so in a spirit of goodwill and co-operation during the demarcation of borders according to the 1967 border accord. Nevertheless, the issue of the ultimate realisation of the unification of all the Nagas within the Indian Union as the right to fight for, as they are Indian citizens, simmers on under the surface, however thwarted and deferred. It is the patent general will of the Naga people, a constant fight to get the Government of India fulfil its promise, whatever divisions political and territorial, are on the way to have the Nagas united under one government for the fundamental basis of their identity and Nagaism. They also know that a society which is not politically united is necessarily divided and political disunity by itself is not a feature imperative to the healthy growth of the Nagas to the main Indian political system and world order, and continues to be a pet phantasm. In any case, Naga identity needs time and leadership and management to give it greater cohesion, strength, maturity and unity till the present parochialism, tribalism, jealousy and friction among themselves for small gains, still plaguing and preventing them from unity in the common goal, hold good.

In the 1960s and early 1970s the Nagaland state government had not much hand in the question of the maintenance of law and order in its state and demanded that since the situation had almost returned to peace and the activities of the rebel Nagas could be better dealt by the Nagaland government with threat of violence and promise of development if the power of law and order was given to them from the army and the Governor. On the other hand, the Government of India contended that the responsibility of law and order would be handed over to the Nagaland state when complete peace and normalcy returned to Nagaland after the underground movement which threatened the integrity of India had been completely subdued.

Meanwhile, an incident fortunately or unfortunately skipped in the irksome situation on 8 August 1972. Seven contumacious but dejected rebel desperados (Nagas) attempted a daring, futile bid to assassinate the Nagaland Chief Minister, Hokishe on his *en route* to Kohima from Shillong. Hokishe's driver, personal body-guard and a constable were killed while his sixteen-year-old daughter and two other police escorts received bullet injuries when about 70 bullets were fired at the car, which were deflected from their courses. The attempt, it seems, was partly motivated by the inclusion of Hokishe in the Indian delegation to the 27th UN General Assembly

as if to oppose Nagaland's independence if the question of Nagaland was raised by the unfriendly countries of India and partly the power struggle within Nagaland.

In view of the situation the Political Affairs Committee of the Union Cabinet, the Governor and the Nagaland cabinet reviewed the security conditions in Nagaland and decided on 30 August 1972 to establish peace in Nagaland and extirpate any kind of secession and outlawed the Naga National Council, the Federal government and the Naga Federal army which were allowed to function in the manner to accord right of movement if not right to insurgency, a minor form of acknowledgment as a matter of convenience as the Government of India showed ways of sympathy for the rebels. These bodies were declared unlawful associations under the Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act, 1967 and their members and supporters particularly some of the opposition members of the Nagaland state legislative assembly would in future be liable to arrest and prosecution under 'the normal procedure', if they would fail to change their stand. The extension of "suspension of operations" against the rebel Nagas on the monthly basis since 1964 under the debris of hundreds of violations ceased from September 1 and the resumption of operations against hostile elements would begin. Second, the Peace Observers' team headed by Dr. M. Aram¹ was also dissolved after having it functioned for the last eight years.

In his broadcast to the state over the AIR, Kohima station on 31 August 1972, the Nagaland Governor, Braj Kumar Nehru said that the normal law and order in Nagaland state like the rest of India would be maintained by the civil authorities and the army would act only in aid of civil power. He further pointed out that there were two battalions of the Assam Rifles and two extra battalions of armed police made available to the Nagaland state government to enable them to perform their duties adequately and deal firmly with any spark of insurgency and breach of peace, though the rebel Nagas were still in a state of disarray owing to conflicts among themselves, dismemberment of their main sanctuary and training facilities in Bangladesh, the common people's desire to pursue peaceful avocations and the development activities of the Government for the Nagas. The three Nagaland Ministers—Chiten Jamir, T. Kikon and Chingwang met the Prime Minister, Mrs. Indira Gandhi, on 1 September, appraised the situation in Nagaland and demanded that the Govern-

¹ Dr. Aram, Peace Convenor, now works for peace and social progress in Nagaland as the Director of the Nagaland Peace Centre, a voluntary organization of which the Sarvodaya leader, J.P. Narayan is the founder-president.

ment authority be strengthened through the civil police force rather than the army. Recovered from the shock of attempted assassination, Hokushe warned that the opposition members who went on to advocate the cause of the Federal government would be brought to the trial.

On 2 September 1972 Phizo on his part in London reacted with consternation to the decision of the Government of India to outlaw the Federal government and to abolish the cease-fire as "the final drive" against the Nagas. He appealed to the Security Council of the UN to intervene and prevent the genocide of the Nagas. He said : "The Indian army clearly means to reopen the war in which a third of the Nagas have already died, and we shall have to defend ourselves. If the Indians wish to abolish our Federal government, they will have to kill its members. There is no other way of making them submit to this banning."¹ The underground leaders also reportedly issued directives to the underground residual elements to start violent activities, declared illegal all political parties helping Government of India or running the Nagaland state government in co-operation with the Indian government and threatened all the government officials with "retribution".

But about 1,216 underground Nagas surrendered in October 1972 and their supporters pleaded for settlement of the Naga problem through peaceful and democratic ways. The other rebels, for the moment, could not flaunt their authority as a parallel government by collecting money as taxes of the Federal government and by recruiting people for their army. At the same time, finding of the confessed statement of the arrested underground lieutenant, the allegedly complicated persons—Messrs S. C. Jamir, Thepsülo Nakhro, Akum Inlong, K. V. Kiditsu and G.C. Poirā—were arrested when the Chief Minister, Hokushe was in Moscow and were released after interrogation.

Ultimately the Central government handed over to the Nagaland government the major responsibility for maintenance of law and order in the state. However, the Government of India in the wake of the Nagas' link with the Chinese, give "special responsibility" to the Governor and the army to deal effectively with any situation arising within and without the sensitive borders of India. Above all, the Naga Regiment, an inception committed by the Central government with the Naga leaders in 1960 agreement, had come into force as the youngest infantry regiment of the Indian army on 1 November 1970 and was affiliated to Kumaon Regiment. The Regiment

¹ *The Observer*, London, September 3, 1972.

recruited mostly from the surrendered soldiers of the Naga Federal army and volunteers from the Naga villages, and the rest of Kumaonis, Garhwalis, Gorkhas and its officers, JCOs and NCOs from Kumaon Regiment¹ and after some competent ones trained in mountain warfare at Ranikhet, U.P., plays a substantial role in the maintenance of law and order in Nagaland. In addition, the village volunteer force, being recruited to combat the hostiles, but commanded by the army officers also have strengthened the security forces in hunting the rebel Nagas down since they have intimate knowledge of their terrain.

On 1 June 1972 the Government of India transferred the affairs of Nagaland from the jurisdiction of the External Affairs Ministry to that of the Ministry of Home Affairs—for administrative convenience.

But the Nagaland government still insists on the Central government on appointment of a separate Governor and High Court for it rather than a Governor and High Court common with the other eastern states as at present. It maintains that the status of a complete state, like the other states of Indian Union would be complete only when the Nagaland government has its own Governor who will look after the interests of the Naga people. However, agreed in principle to appoint a separate Governor, the Government of India is not ready at the moment as another new experiment i.e. North-Eastern Council has been put into practice.

All the nascent states and union territories namely, Assam, Nagaland, Manipur, Tripura, Arunachal Pradesh (NEFA) and Mizoram, covering approximately an area of 98,000 sq. miles and containing a population of about 19.52 million as a whole, are placed under the North-Eastern Council which was set up by the Central government in August 1972, under the North-Eastern Areas Re-organization Act, 1971 for the overriding, strategic and defence necessity and uniform development plans. This Council was inaugurated by the Prime Minister, Mrs. Indira Gandhi on November 8.

This Council is a high-level advisory body to discuss matters of common interest in regard to national security and socio-economic regional development such as all round construction, improvement of transport facilities, power generation, flood control projects and industrialization as a whole in a sense of maximum inter-state co-ordination without constraints of state boundaries and to advise the governments concerned on the action to be taken on any such matter. Besides a common Governor for these five states and two

¹ *Sainik Samachar*, N. Delhi, March 10, 1974, p. 12.

union territories, a common High Court for the entire region and provision for joint cadre of all India services for Assam and Meghalaya on one, and Manipur and Tripura on the other. The Council consists of the Governor, Chief Ministers of Assam, Nagaland, Meghalaya, Tripura, Manipur, Lt. Governor and Chief Minister of Mizoram, the Chief Commissioner and a Counsellor of Arunachal Pradesh, and the representatives of the Central Government's Defence, Finance and Home Ministries. It has its own permanent Secretariat in Shillong and the Central government gives special financial allocations to back up the Council. The decisions of the Council are to be recommendatory but in practice as good as executive. Having seen the importance of integration of the strategic and sensitive north-east with the rest of the country, the Council has given attention to take up a proper system of transport and communication particularly rail link to all states and territories of the region. The Government of India have sanctioned nearly hundred crores of rupees during the Fifth Plan period and for the current financial year (1974) Rs. 33 lakhs for implementation of a number of schemes such as investigation of hydel and thermal power potential, ropeways and developments of animal husbandry and veterinary services projected by the North-Eastern Council.

Given the strategic importance of the area, the Council will certainly reflect not only the greater defence, stability, tranquility and prosperity to the sensitive troubled eastern region, but also dissociate the specter of Chinese moral, political and military support to any insurrectionist and dissenter groups if it is worked out sincerely, although we cannot explicitly gauge the success due to individual and regional politics and interests, insurgent activities and other unseen forces and circumstances. Yet the eastern regions are to be one, whatever hurdles might be there, for their own survival, progress and civilization. Nevertheless, peace, order and stability lies in how the Central government impresses enough to command the mosaic of conflicting interests of the many linguistic and ethnic diversities of the region and to bring all these aspects under review to the advantage of the integration of India by taking into account the internal as well as external factors. However, Nagaland has at the moment refused to join the Council for political reasons, although it does not oppose its concept.

The other important part, the Nagaland state government has been playing is to work for peaceful settlement of the Naga problem. The Chief Minister Hokishe said at the seventh annual session of the Naga Nationalist Organisation at Kohima on 31 January 1970 that

the State government did not make anything to deepen the cleavage in the underground camp indulging into series of political murders and violation of cease-fire terms, but with a view to evolving a formula for a final political settlement of the problem and to unite all the Nagas. He also expressed his regret over the attitude of the underground Nagas for not taking part in the two rounds of meetings he had convened. The Government of Nagaland, as a whole, stated that "in order to solve a political problem which is basically human, the military action is not the answer but a sympathetic understanding of the problem politically is what is called for". Thus the State government displayed an earnest desire to reach a settlement between the Government of India and the underground Nagas as the latter were an inalienable part of the Naga society without whose assistance there could be no final solution to the state problems although it hardened its attitude a little in maintenance of law and order after the attempt of the underground to kill Hokishe. Probably the consequence was that of 13 politicians of the ruling NNO were reportedly killed by the rebels and an attempt to shoot the Nagaland Education Minister, John Bosco Jasokie was foiled in 1973 after Lal Mumawia, former vice-president of the Mizo National Front was killed in Mizoram.

At present, the Nagaland government has advisory power on the question of negotiations with the underground government for peaceful settlement of the problem as we see from the statement of K.C. Pant, Minister of State for Home Affairs in response to a call attention notice in the Rajya Sabha on 27 July 1973 that "it is for the Nagaland government to advise us in this matter". The Hokishe government and the NNO has maintained that there cannot be any talks on political settlement with the underground till they give up their demand for a sovereign Nagaland and militant Naga nationalism.

In between the Naga church leaders in Nagaland also are anxious to extend their possible hands to bring about peaceful settlement of the issue within Indian Union by contacting the underground leaders with the facilities provided by the Nagaland state government. But the Indian government also has refused to have any talks with the Phizoites and made its position clear that the 1960 agreement for state was final solution of the problem and even if anything is to be considered, that would be within the Constitution of India, under peaceful situation without the slightest shadow of foreign interference and intervention in the internal affairs of India.

Within the Nagaland state, the Hokishe state government ran

into bitter difference with the United Democratic Front men when some members of the latter who had defected from the NNO and who were earlier imploring the State and Central government to take a strong line against the misguided people or Pro-Chinese Phizoites, called them now as "Patriots" for Political fiction.

Now, the United Democratic Front and its government is struggling to create a Naga sense of identity and chooses preference to the treatment of the Naga problem as a political one and to be resolved by constitutional, political and peaceful means without resorting to force and opines that the Central government should give opportunity to all Nagas including rebel leaders in U.K., China, etc., to express their mind in a free and frank exchange of views. It has also urged government to hold direct talks with those underground Nagas who have been actually fighting, along with the other leaders, in order to bring about final solution of the problem and rebear peace and normalcy. Not only this, the UDF urges the Central government to repeal the Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act, 1967 which will expire on 31 August 1974, if not further extended by the Parliament, to revive cease-fire agreement, to withdraw the security forces from Nagaland, and to transfer the Governor's "special responsibility" to the state government.

The United Democratic Front government have started the process of releasing all the political prisoners including "Generals" Mowu Thinussillie and some 134 others who are under trial in the special jail built costly by the Hokeishe Government for security reasons at Mawlai outside the municipal limits of Shillong. Now we have to see, "how the UDF will reconcile its past ambivalence with its new responsibilities remains to be seen; but if the challenge is a test for its diplomacy, it is no less an opportunity for the Centre to convince Nagas, that its objective is reconciliation and not confrontation. The task calls for extreme circumspection, but it may not easily be accomplished since the UDF has already adopted a public posture against many of the Centre's policies. The former views on peace-keeping operations in general, and the role of the Army in particular, may possibly lead to controversy between New Delhi and Kohima, as also earlier suggestions that the UDF would re-introduce the cease-fire and start political negotiations with the self-styled Federal government."²

But obviously the UDF government cannot give a real impetus to the political spectrum so long as the underground Nagas stand

¹ S.C. Jamir, *The Dawn is Breaking*, Kohima, 1974, p. 3.

² *The Statesman*, New Delhi, March 2, 1974.

firmly for plighted Naga sovereignty and by no means the members of the UDF, howsoever their position is rendered pro-underground, are loyal to the Constitution of India. And the moment they change their stand, they will be waived on either side.

Again, the United Democratic Front opposes the giving of voting rights to the army security forces stationed in Nagaland. In August 1973 the United Democratic Front delegation led by its President, Mrs. Rano Shaiza, a niece of Phizo, appealed to the Chief Election Commissioner to reverse the decision of voting right given by the Supreme Court of India to the army in an earlier case. Accordingly the Election Commission disallowed the army to exercise its vote locally, but men of the Assam Rifles, Border Security Force and Border Roads Organisation were given voting rights. These forces in favour of the NNO tilted the balance against the UDF in the February 1974 elections.

Today, thousands of Nagas are in Government service, being the major portions of services reserved for them in Nagaland; then, less to other Nagas in Manipur, North Cachar and Mikir Hills and Assam, even a portion is there for the Kukis, Mizos, Kacharis, Garos and Mikirs.

More so seriously important are the development plans and activities of the Government of India in Nagaland. We know that the first and the second Five Year Plans of India were substantially shelved in Nagaland on account of the secessionist movement and the chances of healthy growth of Naga life were thus dwarfed. Moreover, whatever Government did for their progress was tempered by the rebels as scraps to serve against the good of the Nagas or "freedom before the economic development". As such development works began after the Naga Hills-Tuensang unit came up on the demand of the first Naga People's Convention. Since then, in Nagaland, comparatively peaceful conditions had returned, and the Government of India has poured crores of rupees to bring about all-round development under Five Year Plans so that the people would feel that the Government have been certainly working for their betterment. But corruption and nepotism are rampant to drain away the Government money and the general welfare and the poor common people are reaping much less fruits of the Government's economic development plans, which are almost scooped away by their comparatively more, educated, brethren, outsiders. Yet the United Democratic Front government has promised the people to remove corruption and nepotism and said that it "shall ensure that the generous financial assistance received from the Centre is spent in the

interests of the common people". Now the Vizol government has set up a court of inquiry to investigate the complaints of corruption.

Apart from the national highway built in the Second World War from Dimapur via Imphal to Tammu in the Kabow valley of Burma, many motorable and jeepable roads connecting most of the villages of the difficult terrain to the district headquarters have been built and transport services set up by State Transport Corporation in 1965 are being added and plied. It has some 260 km. of surfaced roads, 3,200 km. unsurfaced roads, 1,342 km. of bus routes. These have given immense relief to the Nagas who, for centuries, were walking over bridle or jungle paths and animal tracks. For all purposes, telephone and wireless links, and arrangements for landing sites of small aircraft at various hills, other than the important Dimapur aerodrome, have also been extensively laid. To overcome several difficulties of terrain, Kohima and Imphal will be connected to the micro-wave link in eastern region by June 1974.

The Nagas still depend for their livelihood mainly on agriculture, practised with primitive methods. The terrace and jhum cultivated areas on the sloping plains are miserably very difficult and inadequate to feed on the present population of Nagaland. In order to increase production, the Nagaland government has taken up land reclamation and irrigation projects at a very fast speed; improved varieties of rice have been introduced; regulations have been brought about to improve the system of land tenure and confirm the legal rights of the individuals to land; animal husbandary has been improved; cattle, sheep and poultry farming centres established; horticulture is being encouraged to a great extent. The industrial development like the production of sugar, distillery at Dimapur, pulp and paper mill at Tuli either on a small or large scale, from the locally available resources, have been undertaken. The other big industries except like that of handicrafts, particularly cottage, textile industries, wood, bone and ivory carving, soap-making, candle-making and bee-keeping, are not found possible even in a foreseeable future. Timber is only available resource for industrial development and the factories are asight to produce this timber for the building purposes. A plywood factory is being set up at Tijit in Mon sub-division of Tuensang district at the cost of Rs. 50 lakhs.

The minerals of the soil have not been properly explored so far, except a few oil and coal deposits even which are not commercially exploited. Yet recently, the Oil and Natural Gas Commission of India with the Russian geologists has started drilling oil exploration

wells over a stretch of 25 km. area bordering Assam. A coal-bearing rock extending to a length of 15 km. around Konyā and Ninyam villages, east of Tuensang and deposits of nickel-cobalt minerals in the same Tuensang and Kohima areas have been discovered in 1973¹. Oil struck in the Wokha area is officially stated to be of better quality. On 20 November 1973 an agreement was signed between the Nagaland government and the ONGC for intensification of its exploration. Co-operative societies have been set up to participate in the tribal trades. Before India became independent, Kohima hospital was the only better known one in the area. Now there are quite well-equipped 38 hospitals, 111 dispensaries or clinics and medical services of all kinds are made available apart from many teams of mobile public health units.

There is an acute scarcity of drinking water in Nagaland. The Nagas usually fetch water from the springs. It causes great hardship to them as they go down and up in the early morning and late evening to springs in constant streams by women. Today no fewer than 200 villages have water supply nearby. Electricity has reached 85 villages and towns. And when the 10.5 MW Loktak hydro-electric project costing Rs. 32 crore is completed by 1975, there will be cheap electricity and industrial development in Nagaland as well as Manipur.

There has been rapid progress and development in the field of education. Large numbers of 951 L.P. schools, 161 M.E. Schools, 46 High Schools and 4 colleges have come up. Almost all boys and girls go to the schools, colleges and technical institutions; various scholarships are made ready for further studies to attend the universities in other states of India and abroad and educational parties are taken on tours to see vast India. A North-Eastern Hill University whose jurisdiction covers Nagaland, Arunachal Pradesh, Meghalaya and Mizoram has been established on 19 July 1973 at Shillong and the Prime Minister, Mrs. Indira Gandhi is its first Chancellor, and Dr. Chandran D.S. Devanesen, former Principal, Madras Christian College, the Vice-Chancellor. The Nagaland branch of the University has begun to function at Kohima.

With all these development works, Nagaland is at the laudable threshold of dynamism and progress. Yet the annual income per head of the population is very low. The Government expenditure per head is three or four times more than the revenue. The bulk of

¹ See also, *Indian Minerals: Geological Survey of India*, Calcutta, V. 25, No. 3, July-September 1972.

budget deficit and the entire outlay on development works are met by grants from the Central government. All these development activities¹ are going on in peace with security in contrast to peace with suffering, although the present day wide anxiety, frustration, tension, pandemonium, fear of suspicion of the stationing of military forces to suppress the rebel Nagas linger quite palpably in their minds.

The other unfortunate side of the Nagas is that they have not so far reached any activity of political unity among themselves. They have either been inveigled or pitted against one another within the womb of their rising political sense and construction, and the germs of destruction sprout out and cast dark shadows over their minds. This is because of the fact that the Nagas are still on the way to political maturity from centuries of backwardness; nor have they come out altogether from the clutches of the traditional feud, head-hunting and tribalism deleterious to unity, and it is the fratricidal conflict among themselves into which they had been politically divided. To mention with, their history teems with instances of bloody head-hunting wars as a gay sport, whose praises they sing unstintingly even today. They are yet to know that disunity has been the bone of every weak human society, saps its strength and bends upon destroying it. Although on occasions, the Naga thinkers have made conscious attempts to demonstrate the ruin of their society by evil elements and shout exhortations to abandon them by following animistic tenets or ethics of human brotherhood and Christian virtues. However, heterogeneity, lacking the common traditions, poverty, ignorance, illiteracy, power struggle and other circumstances pull them down from realization and pry apart the unity of their people as a sect in which disunity and wrecking activities continue, and decompose the society. Even the British conquest of the Nagas also was primarily because of the disunity amongst the Nagas themselves rather than the British intention to rule over their barren land.

Even after Independence in 1947, disunity within the Naga National Council grew rampant—certainly an unfortunate beginning. Sakhrie, Secretary of the Naga National Council and a talented propagandist-writer was murdered in cold blood for his tell-tale contacts with the Medhi government of Assam against Phizoite policy. This was the first grave symptom of mistake for the beginning of gruesome conflict and killing among the Nagas

¹ See also, *Tojana*, N. Delhi, June 15, 1973, p. 409.

themselves, apart from between the rebel Nagas and the Indian government troops. The Nagaland Federal government ordered their soldiers that any Naga who was acting or behaving insidiously against their government or working for and passing any secret to the Government of India, should be killed or chastised with exemplary punishment. Under this cruel order and violence, hundreds of people were killed till and after the breakdown of political negotiations in 1967 and the Phizoites' involvement with the Chinese.

The Zeliangrong Nagas led by Rani Gaidiliu, had armed clashes with the underground Nagas before she surrendered along with 308 of her followers—Khampais on 24 September 1966 at Henima. Later on she met the Prime Minister, Mrs. Indira Gandhi and demanded an administrative unit for Zeliangrongs (tinged together of Zemai, Liangmai and Rongmai (Kabui tribes) living in North Cachar Hills of Assam, Tamenglong sub-division of Manipur and Nagaland. About half of her followers were later on absorbed in the Nagaland armed police. She received "Tamrapatra", as a distinguished freedom fighter on the occasion of the Silver Jubilee of Indian Independence. Now, she has been working for Zeliangrong administrative unit in Nagaland as a nominated MLA in the Legislative Assembly of Manipur.

Again, coming to underground movement, the Phizoites cleverly stripped the Federal government led by Khugato Sukhai, for they had brought against him a charge of so disgraceful a nature and replaced Rev. Mhiasieu as the President of the Federal government on 26 October 1967. Then they tried to put their like-minded men to the Nagaland State government also so as to divulge government secrets.¹ Then in the abortive putsch under the direction of the Phizoite leaders ended the domination of the Sema triumvirate—General Kaito, Scato Swu and Khugato Sukhai—spoiled the heyday, soon returned to the Hobbean state of nature and clang the bell of bloodshed among Nagas themselves, however, for sometime, it was difficult to dissociate one faction from other and brought destruction to painstaking build-up of their political organization after great traumatic hurdles. General Kaito's storm of criticism of Phizoism, the fear of the communist Chinese rule over Nagaland, the clash of personality with General Mowu and sympathy with the villagers who

¹ *Life* reported on September 2, 1968: "In Nagaland, as in Vietnam, it is difficult to tell a friend from a foe. Too, the Nagaland state government, like that of South Vietnam, has been infiltrated by the underground and governmental decisions on security and counter-insurgency reach the rebels as fast as they are made."

suffered so much from collections of money, foodstuffs, fines at the point of gun for different works, since Kaito was keenly aware of the fact that their movement could not endure without the support of the people drained the garner of the Phizoites' strength. The Baptist church leaders who avowedly ingrained faith in the commonwealth of God, were also grisly menaced of what the Chinese connection and import of communist ideology would likely breed to be in dire peril and sacrifice in terms of religion and the church.¹ They stopped inciting their congregations from the pulpit against the Hindu domination of India. On the contrary, they tolled the church bells as the signal against contagion of communism, their staunch opposition against it as atheistic leaven and pestilence.

Here, we may, for our purpose, examine precisely what Marxian communism implies to religion or Christianity for which most of the Naga Christians are dead against. Karl Marx (1818-83), a Jewish socio-economist and philosopher who wept in repining at the penurious workers being exploited in the hands of a few rich under capitalism theorised a new economic science of human life, after putting a strenuous study and acute observation of the working conditions of the industrial capitalist society and the laws of life in dialectical materialism. He came to the conclusion that, "the mode of production in material life determines the general character of the social, political, and spiritual processes of life. It is not the consciousness of men that determines their existence, but, on the contrary, their social existence determines their consciousness."² Thus for Marx, man as an economic or eating animal (substructure) in the material conditions of life subordinates the religion, ethics, laws, arts and institutions of society (superstructure).

In other words, religion even if it plays a great role in human life has not much value in society where inborn human virtues in a world of plenty dominate, in Marxian jargon, "from each according to his ability to each according to his needs". Religion as a "mere myth" has become a good instrument of the cruel, cunning and exploiting class upon the ignorant, good, poor class in every human society whether the most primitive or the most civilized, for which in the words of Marx, in the *Communist Manifesto* (1848), "the history of all hitherto existing societies is the history of the class struggle" (between the rich and the poor). And for the sufferings and miseries of human life produced by the capitalism, the Jewish prophet,

¹ See Mehta, Ved, *Portrait of India*, London, 1971, p. 212.

² *A Contribution to the Critique of Political Economy*, 2nd German translation by N.I. Stone, Chicago, 1904, pp. 11-12,

Jesus Christ condemned the rich men to his heart's content¹ and logically taught men a double life—spiritual and earthly for solace without a practically cardinal principle which could eradicate poverty. On the contrary, Marx attacked capitalism and not the rich men and opined that Christianity of such kind releasing imaginary joys of heaven for the virtuous as an Utopia, has become a soporific opium of the people after the saying of Kingsley, an English clergyman. The derivation of fantastic satisfaction from religion by the suffering people without putting their rational efforts to find out the root cause, Marx found religion not merely a delusion but “the cry of the oppressed creature, the heart of a heartless world,”² for which he urged mankind to look at the mirror of materialism than religion. In essence, Marxism emphasises on historical materialism than static religion as human society has been passing from ‘the Asiatic’ to communism where state will wither away and the things themselves would work under the improved technique of production by human co-operation and freedom will be possible for all men. Marx writes: “In place of the old bourgeois society, with its classes and class antagonisms, we shall have an association, in which the free development of each is the condition for the free development of all”. Thus, all workers will be free when they destroy the chains put upon them by capitalism, through the struggle.

The commonplace Naga people hardly know mystic communism of Marx's *Das Capital* (1867)—the Bible of working people, and its nature and practice by socialist countries as compared to the *Bible* of Christianity and capitalism. Rather Christianity which becomes a leaven in Nagaland has developed strangely a symptom which prevents romanticism, empiricism, rationalism, science and technology in the minds of the Nagas since the Christian missionaries in Nagaland emphasised spiritual kingdom superfluously which we are ourselves not sure ‘where it is’ than the earthly government which “is designed,” as wrote Calvin in his *Institutes of the Christian Religion* in sixteenth century, “as long as we live in this world, to cherish and support the external worship of God, to preserve the pure doctrine of religion, to defend the constitution of the church, to regulate our lives in a manner requisite for the society of men, to form our manners to civil justice, to promote our concord with each other, and to establish general peace and tranquility”. Yet the life force which follows hardly any moral precept but primarily material

¹ Matthew, 19 : 23-24; St. Luke, 18: 18-25, New Testament, *Holy Bible*.

² See also, Engels, Frederick, *Anti-Duhring*, Moscow, 1947, p. 470.

necessities of life itself turn apathetic to spiritualism in contrast to the prevalent land of Christianity. In other words, Nagas are moving as what their proverb runs that *food dominates the life of man and all evils come in the absence of it in the stomach*. In this way, the question is not whether the Nagas like socialism and communism or not, the tide of time and environment is such that it or any other refined capitalism will dialectically rise in Nagaland and those who are shouting against it will themselves be compelled to obey communism or socialistic pattern or social capitalism or both in the rapid rise of *detente* which means a state of co-existence modified to allow (temporary) accommodation with the hostile system in order to receive advantages and concessions from each other like the United States-China and United States-Soviet Union. In mystery, heaven of God preached by Christ, it seems, is very much rivetted to the heaven of Marx in the deep land of rationalism which for a layman is extremely difficult to understand. But why the Nagas are so much against godless idea of life goes back to their religious background also.

When mental and ideological conflicts were going between Phizoites and the Christians on the issues of Christianity, freedom, communism in Nagaland, the tempers of the Phizoites convulsed with rage and planned to kill General Kaito and his followers to warn any break-away elements and to halt crumbling of the underground movement. Accordingly, Kaito and some of his followers were killed and the power conflict reached a pitch of sufficient intensity. On the contrary, instead of cementing underground unity, it invariably signalled its own bout of disunity and destruction. The devil of condign Naga revenge began to feel its way in the minds of the Nagas. Rev. Mhiasi and his two secretaries, Ramyo and Kehovi were kidnapped from the Federal government's headquarters at Chedema on 30 October 1968 by Khugato group under General Zeheto, taken to Zungti, a village in Sema area and later on freed when they fell in a tale of woe for their action. On November 2, at a conference of underground leaders, it was again decided with a flicker of hope that both the Federal government and the Army government should be dissolved and replaced by a Revolutionary government. with Leshimo Nyushu as President, Scato Swu as Prime Minister, and General Zuheto as Defence Minister. Having condemned the placid role of the NNC for failure to bring about a political settlement, and of ignoring the interests of the smaller tribes, the conference decided to form a new party, the Council of the Naga People, with Khugato as Chairman, that would seek to continue the

cease-fire and to resume negotiations with the Government of India in order to reach a peaceful settlement of the Naga problem. Again Khugato's group kidnapped two other tried leaders—Jeren Koba, a former minister of the Federal government and General Meren Kaba on tenter-hooks on 6 January 1969 and took them to Zungti. The following day they occupied the Chedema headquarters. On January 15, Khugato and Scato Swu urged Mrs. Indira Gandhi for the resumption of peace talks. In a statement in the Lok Sabha on February 19, Dinesh Singh, the External Affairs Minister, said that a settlement of the Naga problem had been accorded in 1960 and that there would be no scope for further talks at present. This Government's statement assumed that the rebel factions, some of them entangling with the Chinese were divergent to speak, to the still with a single voice and until they could be persuaded to do so, no final political settlement was possible.

But the power race among the Nagas still persisted. After the election of Hokishe as the Chief Minister as the result of the General Elections in Nagaland in February 1969, the angry Zungti group against the high-handed activities of Mowu as the Commander-in-Chief consolidated the strength of the Indian security forces to step against Phizoites' co-operation with China. Then General Mowu and his two hundred men were captured. After sometime, Hekhini, a self-styled brigadier of the Kaito group, was allegedly killed by the Phizoites at Saranamai village in Mao area on August 21, while he was bearing the faction of misfortune with equanimity. Within the Zungti faction, much to the chagrin, the rift deepened on 20 March 1970. Brigadier Nivito surrendered to the Government with his 100 followers. To this move, General Zeheto reacted with a high hand by promulgating an 'Army Ordinance' under which invertebrate deserters would be punished severely. Meanwhile, Scato Swu, the Prime Minister of the Revolutionary Government of Nagaland said that the political aspirations of the Nagas would not wane despite surrenders. Ruling out the possibilities of the political settlement of the Naga issue by the military force and determining to fight through peaceful methods for achieving its objective, he added that the problem remained 'knotty' as long as the Government tried to suppress the movement by capturing the last gun from the Nagas.

Again the change and purge of the underground leadership for a pro-Peking policy to enable the Nagas to get more aid from China occurred on 23 April 1971. Zashei Huiire, the acting President was removed and Inkongmeren, Vice-President of the Naga National Council was appointed President of the Federal government. Mhi-

asiu and J. Ramyo were ousted from the underground government for the their suspected associations with the rival "Revolutionary Government of Nagaland" while the latter was already leaning for a settlement with the Government of India. The Revolutionary government, and the Hongkin government revived by Thungti Chang in the Tuensang area in 1971 were excluded from the purview of the Unlawful Activities Act as these two rebel faction governments were not in secessionist line like the Naga Federal government. As such, the Nagaland state government permitted the revolutionary rebels to go about the Naga villages free and armed.

Under such conflicts and plethora of suspicion between Kaito faction and the Phizoites, arisen out of the wretched stupidity of the leadership and knowledge that, "a house divided against itself cannot stand," the independence movement became paralysed and waded in blood and freakish human tendency. The morale of fighting became very severely flabby for the means necessary to the achievement of their professed goal were anarchic, corrupted or devalued altogether. The subversive methods failed and to heal the wound was miserably difficult as the old fiends of revenge were stalking the scene. A large number of them had sorely lost faith in their leaders, lost sight of their objectives and vacillated between hope and fear and between the sense of leaderlessness and security of life, and favoured even the abandonment of the cause they were fighting for. Even in 1969, about 1,049 rebels surrendered to the Government and were rehabilitated. The other abstained on one pretext or the other at the nadir of bitter despair and paroxysm of humiliation. In this way they steadily desponded, fizzled out and suffered themselves an irretrievable setback. The failure of rectification of the underground factions, it looks, almost synchronised with the advanced state of collapse of the Naga nationalist movement itself. Yet the worst of all, the debris of conflicts tilted at windmills around. And the Nagas directly or indirectly vented their intrinsic wrath on the underground Nagas who failed to bring about a successful solution with the Government of India at negotiations or other means and brought the Naga cause to shame. At the opposite side, the Indian government were making steady efforts to win the Nagas over for India and armed forces had to scuttle at the secessionists and see the smouldering fighting spirit to percolate all the way for the defence of India.

The other compatriot Nagas, particularly Angamis, Chakhesans, Semas, Rengmas (Nzonyu), Lothas, Konyaks, Shipoumai, Zeliangrongmai and the like, who clung to freedom unswervingly took refuge with

endurance in the vulnerable rugged terrains which they chose as their shelter, inured to no matter, whatever manner of hardships and death, leaving their beloved ones behind and became adopted to the habit of 'jungle happy'. Some others invincibly went to Pakistan and China¹ in search of aid to achieve their freedom. But the emergence of Bangladesh as a free state out of the oppressive and abominable military rule of General Yahya Khan, the West Pakistan dictator, over 75 millions of Muslim Bengalis forced them (the Nagas) to follow the abject and unconditional surrender of Pakistan troops to the stalwart Indian armed forces on 22 December 1971. General Thinussillie and about 500 Naga-Mizo rebels also surrendered. The others with the Mizo rebels etc. fled into the Miaini area on the Tripura-Bangladesh border and the Kachlong reserve forest in the Chittagong hills.²

A dusk to dawn curfew for two months had been clamped within 16 km barbed wire belt on the Indian side of international border with Burma, on reported news that over 200 well-equipped Chinese-trained Nagas led by Zawsim, the Kachin rebel leader, were trying to sneak back to Nagaland and Manipur after they had armed clashes with the Burmese security forces at Tekti near Kampti in Upper Burma in which two rebels were killed. Then security forces had intensified patrolling all the likely approachable routes in order to intercept them. At the same time, more Chinese-trained Naga-Mizo groups were lurking in wilderness along the India-Burmese border to get into Nagaland, Manipur, Mizoram, Tripura and Chittagong hill tracts. On 22 March 1973, following the increased rebel activities, 201 Tripura villages bordering Mizoram, Sylhet and Chittagong hills in Bangladesh were declared disturbed area.

In spite of the stringent measures taken by the Government, according to a preliminary statement of a Chinese rebel Naga arrested by the Nagaland police, he along with 80 other Nagas led by Lieutenant Colonel Vedai (Chakhesang) sneaked into Nagaland through Tuensang district in small batches during April to June 1973 or so, after receiving training in guerilla warfare from China and thereafter they entered Kachin through the Nakhe Pass. But it was

¹ According to official estimates, a total of 1,650 underground Nagas went to China during 1967 and 1968. About 700 rebels till the end of 1969, and out of them 275 were captured, about 150 were released on 31 December 1969 and 1 January 1970. Only the leaders were tried and kept in the jail for offences for violations of Arms Act, Passport Act and other anti-state activities.

² See also, O'Malley, L.S.S. *Chittagong*, Calcutta, 1908; Hutchinson, R.H.S., *Chittagong Hill Tracts*, Allahabad, 1909.

reportedly said that about 500 Chinese-trained Nagas with arms and Chinese Communist ideology returned in Nagaland in 1973. They brought sophisticated weaponry such as rocket launchers, light machine guns, automatic rifles, grenades and other ammunition from China and distributed pamphlets in villages.

干一辈子革命，挑一辈子重担。
做一辈子配角，受一辈子活罪。

(Chinese pamphlet distributed in the villages of Nagaland in 1973 inciting Nagas to take to the warpath. "For fuller life, take the road of revolution.....")

The rebels in Nagaland and Manipur ambushed Government troops five times in July-August 1973 in which more than 20 Government soldiers were killed and several captured according to official sources. Here, as things stood, Mao Tse-tung's words, "fight, fail, fight again, fight again till their victory; that is the logic of the people," seemingly prevailed in their action directed by Muiva with a number of liaison officers of Kachin Independent Army. Addressing Parliament in August (1973) the Home Affairs Minister, Uma Shanker Dikshit declared mildly the intensified subversive activities in Nagaland and the Chinese support and military aid to the Nagas as an unfriendly act. It is also still difficult to gauge what they will actually accomplish from what lurks quiescent in the background. But the tripartite Indian, Bangladesh and Burmese governments, security forces and Intelligence agencies are extremely keen on surveillance on the sensitive borders along with the exchange of information on their movements that Peking has called "hatching conspiracies to suppress national minorities".

On 16 August 1973 the Revolutionary government was formally dissolved at an impressive parade held at Zunheboto camp in Mokokchung in the presence of Governor B.K. Nehru, in which 330 armed rebels led by Revolutionary Prime Minister, Scato Swu, President Lessumo and the C-in-C Zeheto surrendered or declared by themselves overground in intoxication with the profound disappointment and failure. And the others of this group followed, amounting 1000. In a telling speech, condemning the Phizoites as filibusters and the dependance of the Naga Federal government on foreign

countries as danger, Scato Swu offered their cooperation to the Nagaland state government to restore peace in the land.

But resenting the use of word "surrender", in an interview with UNI on 6 September 1973, Scato Swu said: "We (nine revolutionary rebels) met the Prime Minister last month in an effort to end the bitter, wasteful and protracted conflict in Nagaland. We have maintained that a peaceful settlement to the conflict must be found. We accepted the verdict of the people of Nagaland and their desire and wish for peace. We are anxious to serve the people at this critical juncture in every way possible and are prepared to sacrifice everthing for our motherland. We have assured the Prime Minister that in order to ensure peace and prosperity of Nagaland, we shall take the oath of loyalty to the Constitution of India, so that we, like others in Nagaland, can fully participate in the effort of the nation and enjoy the rights of the Nagas safeguarded in the Constitution. The decision to dissolve our set-up was unanimously adopted and signed by leaders of Tangkhul, Pochuri, Yumchunger, Sangtam etc., besides the Sema."

By swearing parole of loyalty to the Indian constitution, these rebels including General Zeheto as deputy commandant in the rank of Lieutenant Colonel, formed a new police battalion of the Border Security Force would, seemingly, put against their parental Federal government, however their surrender being engendered by pressure of Nagaland government and loose reconciliation of the Phizoites after the breakdown of the Federal set-up. Some over 200 men of Hongkin government in Noklak and Thonokenuy areas of Tuensang area also have surrendered to Nagaland government in the presence of State Minister, Tochi Hanso and some Tuensang officials without arms. In all about 9000 rebel Nagas have come out over-ground or surrendered and that most of them had been successfully rehabilitated in the State Armed Police, the Border Security Force and other services while some about 100 underground Nagas reportedly have recently slipped away into Burma on way to China for military training.

Even within the Naga Federal government, the Ramyo group reportedly reached a breaking point by declaring itself a parallel government challenging Phizo and his brother Keviyallie backed by the Naga Federal army. But Muiva not only reportedly coaxed the differences of the two groups into an effective rapproachment but initiated a common cause for independence with the Mizo leader, Laldenga who had been in Peking from Rawalpindi. Muiva and his group, learning Maoism and taking by heart of Mao's guerilla words:

"Fight no battle unprepared; fight no battle you are not sure of winning," are in the upper Burma, China and other countries to give a fresh material start while some others are hanging almost in the siege and balance in Nagaland even though we do not get a clear picture from inside sources. It is said that the rebel forces in north-eastern region here affiliated themselves with the United Liberation Front, led by General Bo Let Ya, a former Burmese Defence Minister. What is clear to us is that the Naga Federal army still maintain general headquarters and three commands—Western, Eastern and Northern. Each command consists of three "brigades" and each "brigade" of three "battalions." The strength of a battalion, however varies between 30 and 40 and the whole army is estimated to consist no more than 1,500 men although their supporters are there overground.¹ But, "the rebels' continuous liaison with Peking still prevails as the terrains along the borders of Nagaland, China and Burma are very difficult for continuous vigilance and for the rather ineffective intelligence work of the army and the civilian authorities."²

Meanwhile, most of the rebel Meiteis came out overground or surrendered, formed a party called Kanglei League and took part in Manipur legislative assembly election 1974. The Chief Minister, Lawrence Chal Chhunga and Lt. Governor S.P. Mukherjee of the Mizoram government had peace talks with the four-member delegation headed by 36 year-old Malsawma Colney, Chairman of the so-called National Emergency Commission of the rebel "Mizo Federal government" at Aizawl from 11 to 21 February 1974. In the talks, the delegation reportedly expressed their willingness to give up its armed secessionist movement and work for settlement of the vexed political problem within the Indian Constitution provided that Government ensured general amnesty to all Mizo National Front volunteers and their suitable rehabilitation. The delegation left without tangible results, for their new, secure sanctuary in the inaccessible Chittagong hills of Bangladesh and Arakan hills of Burma where the Chin-Hill Communist Party also operates, with about 1000 rebels.³ Then Malsawma went to Peking to have political talks with other rebel and Chinese leaders. It was reported that he discussed the Mizo situation with one Pakistan senior official who accompanied Bhutto on his visit to China in May 1974. Subsequently, the Mizoram government declared the whole Territory as disturbed area for six

¹ See also *Times of India*, March 7, 1974.

² *Amrita Bazar Patrika*, Calcutta, November 14, 1973.

³ *Assam Tribune*, Gauhati, February 24, 1974.

months from 1 March 1974 under Section 3 of the Assam Disturbed Area Act, 1955 and after which Mizoram Lt. Governor, S.P. Mukherjee and his security guard were shot and injured in an abortive attempt on the Silchar-Aizawl road on March 10. Still the Mizo rebels along with their allied Chakmas, Maghs, Tipperas, Hmars, Kukis, Khyengs, Pankhos and Razakars (those Biharis who were loyal to the Pakistan army in 1971) function their government in Tripura, Chittagong, Chin and Arakanese hills and jungles particularly in the Miani and Kachlong reserve forest areas and issue directives to their soldiers and sympathisers to continue Political murders of loyal people, and lightning raids and forays on police stations and government offices in a way to fight for independence,² while Laldenga has been staying in Karachi with his family.

Nevertheless, the general Nagas want peace in their land. The rebels have been in political stalemate or what they call a period of great humiliation and ridicule for wrongs and mistakes committed within and without. The Government announced that General Mowu and other important insurgents would be tried at Shillong by a special tribunal constituted by the Nagaland state government. Zashei Huire, the President, Vyallay Metha, the Army Chief and Purkrove, a revolutionary Chakhesang Vice Army Chief of the Federal government with Phizo's brother, Keviyallie are trying to heal the wounds within the liquid underground set-up in aware of Ibn Saud's words, "Everything is a means—even an obstacle" and bolster the Naga National Council up. Now their leader Phizo has advised the Nagas to learn from the Chinese to achieve their goal. Still they surge forth their *kismet*, waiting for external help from big powers particularly China, USA, UN, etc. to come to their rescue and help in a way of shouting to the moon without much thinking from the political reality whether they are able to get any open acknowledgement of recognition for their cause in the present context of international politics or not. Whatever may be, generations to come will judge the concepts and actions of those in authority today by the effects of what they have done on the course of their right to life, freedom, security, identity, happiness and progress. Still a memorandum says, "the problem of Naga-Meitei insurgency will remain indefinitely,"³ just to fulfil the traditional prophecy that a just government will replace the venal government and white people (Malishas or so) will

¹ Carey & Tuck, *The Chin Hills*, V. 1, Rangoon, 1896.

² See also, *Blitz*, Bombay, March 30, 1974; *Indian Express*, New Delhi, March 31, 1974.

³ *Hindusthan Standard*, Calcutta, October 7, 1973.

come again in the land.

Now and again, in the wake of independence movement in the embryonic stage, some Nagas have been interested in plunder, in the pursuit of traditional vendettas, in collection of money from officials and villagers for their self-purposes by a show of force in guise of political and the Nagaland sovereignty. As a result, the morality of the people, generally speaking, has become profligate. The obstinate rebels, however small in number never budge from their principal standpoint and continue to maintain their position by compelling the poor villagers to give a house tax of Rs. 3 per year and other food provisions for filling their ravenous stomachs in quest of freedom, by conscripting young men and women to their army at opportune times, by forcing villagers sometimes for use as porters, and by adopting guerrilla warfare, sporadic ambushing at army convoys, patrolling parties without making any sustainable threat to the law and order situation in Nagaland.

But at times, it is sans doubt, a heart-rending to think of the physical and mental gnawings of the innocent common Nagas who have only one ambition in life, i.e., to live in peace, to work for plenty and happiness with least sense of national glory, patriotism or ideology have been paralysed with fear and subjected to indiscriminate, brutal beatings, floggings, kidnappings, imprisonments and other ignominious forms of torture in the hands of the rebels as well as the Government security forces including village guards or volunteer force as it has been difficult to distinguish them whether they are government men or rebel men.¹ Sometimes they have been tortured to exhort information, and any sort of castigation of vices and encouragement of virtues is taken as a prelude to putting oneself into danger although such contemptuous acts force them to fraternise either side. Besides, the common villagers' fellow-feeling and support has not been properly getting in touch with the hostiles due to their past impetuous overbearing behaviour, fiendish threat, imperfections and foibles and demands for supplies of money and food, though many a time and circumstances the sympathisers of the rebels offer protection to the kith and kin of the wanted men at large.² At the same time, they sometimes shove with the Government by supplying information about their movements. However, they are afraid to death even if they know that life and death are part of each other and do not want to stand up and fight for justice and truth. They

¹ See also, Dr. M. Aram's Communication for North-Eastern Border Areas, *Communicator*, New Delhi, V. IX, No. 2, March, 1973. p. 53.

² *Motherland*, New Delhi, November 17, 1973.

seam in just a yell of sorrow within themselves that they are weak to preserve their dearest lives and looks in John Locke's phrase that, "no one ought to harm another in his life, health, liberty or possessions." Conversely they keep golden rule, "do unto others as you would have them do unto you." Notwithstanding, their faces look full of excitement, their eyes glistened with tears but hearts are full of *joie de vivre* for bright future under threats of violence and promises of development and progress. They expect, even it stands to reason that it will take time, in reverie the apparition which would, as if a nature's miracle break the cruel chains fettering upon them, put an end to their sufferings and bring irreversible peace based on security and mutual trust since they have been riven enough by head-hunting war, British conquest and present revolt in juxtaposition. Under these unyielding environments of the splash of suspicion and conflict, they imagine that they are travestied to the ideals of humanity and that the government that would be of the people to lead the people to happiness is indifferent in them; their leaders ignorant and corrupted are spurious and weak to save them and even their God may have observed helplessly to moot equity, freedom and fraternity.

Coming to the political point, we see that since the British rule in India, the Nagas had been and are in India as a part and parcel of it although their demand for freedom has persisted. The Union of India is a homeland of diversity of races, cultures, languages, traditions, etc., but a homogeneous one after long processes of history. From this viewpoint, it is to be understood that even the political problem of the Nagas, whatever may be, by any means, has to be settled with the Government of India and not anywhere else, as *ipso facto* proves. So it would be imperative for the Nagas to resolve their issues with the Indian government with least waste of life, waste of human and natural resources and waste of ingenuity. Sporadic shooting between Indian government forces and the underground Nagas, independent invectives, political trickery, intrigue and killing among the Nagas themselves will not solve the problem at all, even if such state of affairs produces inevitable changes in various domains of life—its source, rate, mode and means. In such a terrain of Nagaland the nature of fighting, may be small or large, from time to time, aided from outside, will be no end to the guerilla warfare as the record of the past years has shown.

On the other side, whatever mistakes or crimes so far a Naga commits against himself or against his own people out of unavoidable circumstances or a small material gain in ignorance and foolishness in this betrayal age, bestial killing of one Naga by another Naga in

the fashion of civil strife for causes known or unknown should be timely stopped, though it is accompanied by its justification that killing is done for the good of Nagaland. If a man continues unheedingly his sin, let him live in the shadow of forgiveness or throw him timely like a weed in the field as narrated by Jesus Christ in his parable. It is better to think what is to be done for their aspirations, expectations and essentialism, and come to reason of Roman Cicero, 'which alone raises us above the level of beasts and enables us to draw inferences, to prove and disprove, to discuss and solve problems, and to come to conclusions'. Otherwise this conflict eats away the vitalities of the Nagas and the very survival of Nagaland is at great stake. So pursuant to reason and forging nobility, bygones are to be bygones, the Nagas better see reality from the holy aspiration and keep poet Auden's saying, "We must love each other or must die."

Today the public opinion is exhibitingly divided, misguided, repressed and ineffective to form a commonplace goal in Nagaland ravaged by revolt and torn by internal dissensions and assassinations although it is moving towards peace, normalcy, stability and settlement of Naga issue within Union of India as reflected in the results of the third general elections in the state, despite the rebels' call for a boycott of the election. *The Warrior*, monthly journal published by the Director of Information, Publicity and Tourism of the Nagaland government, and the two weekly newspapers namely the *Nagaland Times* monitored for the Naga National Organisation, the Government of India and the *Citizens Voice* for the United Democratic Front, the underground Nagas, and *The Thinker* (Journal of Thinkers Forum, Nagaland, Biannual) are not able to cope with it as democracy would demand. And any newspaperman of India or foreign press is debarred from entering freely into Nagaland under the Inner Line Permit system. Only the local correspondents who are allowed by the Nagaland government or Federal government function there at their mercy.¹

Again, at the deep bottom of the society, the Nagas are largely rivals for power and money derived from the narrowness of tribal politics and politicisation as it is overlaid to include almost every segment of interest of each individual and tribe. Such a thing is clearly visible in elections in which scattered series of local contests in the various places, each of which brings forth its own conflicting issues and organisations as well as personalities based on personal

¹ *Amrita Bazar Patrika*, Calcutta, October 31, 1973.

circles of friends, clients, influences and parties against their own democracy which emphasizes on the merits of the people's interest only. Not only this they often preach false propaganda of the objectives of the parties, force and bribe the poor villagers to cast vote for the parties. In this way most of the candidates in the elections spend a lot of money and service in the hope that once elected and if one becomes minister, it would mean robbing thousands or lakhs of money from the people in the fashion of service to the people. Now, it sets problems to politicians and social scientists before it ultimately will go away when their self-conscious mind passes to their own understanding and growth.

Another staggering character of the developing Naga politics and economics is vilely the restless pursuit for power as the means of existence, security and acquisition of money and property to live well, as other means being precarious, among almost all educated persons, either in the Government of India or the underground government. Of course, it looks like what Thomas Hobbes (1588-1679), an English philosopher, in *Leviathan*, depicts the human nature after power for preservation of life: "I put for a general inclination of all mankind, a perpetual and restless desire of power after power, that ceaseth only in death. And the cause of this, is not always that a man hopes for a more intensive delight, than he has already attained to; or that he cannot be content with a more moderate power, but because he cannot assure that power and means to live well, which he has at present without the acquisition of more."

The Naga politicians know, by no means, that power is not for all but for a talented few who are actuated by love of the people with the knowledge of statecraft. But when no alternative means to a good end offer, most of them unfortunately succumb to the temptation of seizing power of any sort largely for selfish impulse and villainous reasons than enthusiasm in politics and emphasize more terrestrial propensities of men, seemingly unaware of higher heavenly good or justice. These unscrupulous politicians, joined by bureaucrats lubricated with bribes, grabbing contractors, merchants and petty landowners, though numerically very small, say a few hundreds, think in terms of flamboyant drinks like whisky, brandy, gin, tastes or revels or other sensual lecheries and erotic love—lives full of sterile pursuits rather than of thoughts. Once in power they are prone to suppress any opposition right or wrong in Laskian sense.¹ To put precisely, leading a voluptuous life morally displaced

¹ See Laski, H., *A Grammar of Politics*, London, 1925.

and culturally uprooted, certainly void of good life, they are acting more as Ecclesiasts 7:15 of the *Holy Bible* says, "for a man has no better thing under the sun than to eat, drink and be merry". Only a very few of them know that the Greek philosopher, Epicurus (342-270 B.C.) advised the Greeks that pleasure, "comes from sober thinking, the sensible investigation of what to choose and to avoid, and getting rid of ideas which agitate the soul. Common sense is our best guide. It tells us that we cannot live happily unless we live wisely, nobly and justly...The virtues are inseparably linked with pleasure."

These people have their children's education from the costly institutions for knowledge since the public schools are poor, inadequate and neglected. Strangely, most of their boys and girls become depraved, indisciplined, timid, sensual without much thinking alive for the advancement of the society. They build their houses in order to live on house rent, and use their influence in getting their sons and daughters, relatives, friends, acquaintances appointed in the government jobs so that they will see them happy and rich than the disgustedly poor illiterate masses. The best interests of the people are not much among their main concerns, but fraudulent economic motives determining their political affiliation and action. Consciously or unconsciously they wear betrayal in the cloak of smiling appearances and work insidiously against the growing political, economical and social vitality of Naga personality. They desperately try to create a semblance of a privileged, high-bourgeois culture, manifest themselves their political aspirations obviously in different insipid political activities and want to continue the present status quo between the rebels and Government of India, so that they can go on making profits rather than the service to the improvement of forlorn conditions. This class—"living devils"—cluttered with begatelle tendencies disdain their fellow uneducated ones as rags or inferiors in status and spend their day away in gratification of their own interests, frivolity and sins of other people, keeping their own evils behind, in Leo Tolstoyian sense. For them, opportunism is measuring and luring rod than political principle. Most of them throw their own souls and cause in unpredictable ways, sometimes for unexpected reasons if they know that money and status are confirmed in there. They appear sanctimonious while their simple folk live in religious action without talking much of religion. Bloating with pride, they seem to be fickling to opportunities and hedonism and boasting of their position economically better than the poor and underprivileged fellow-countrymen and feeling happy in despat-

ching their own people to hell rather than to heaven. They act repugnantly to Nagaism which points out that the spirit of human politics is a divinely motion ordained by God or Nature upon the supermen to work for humanity.

All these state of things, by now fairly known, demonstrate that it is very much a period of hoaxable bastards, demagogues, quacks, hypocrats and snobs. And Aristotle's saying, "Man, when separated from law and justice, is the worst of all animals," proves true of meaning.

Grown exasperated at so scandalous and insolent a display of these persons' frailties and vanities, the just and humanitarian people have not gathered their strength to express their detestation out in an open revolution although their will lives in Rousseau's words: "Sweep away, therefore, all the false fabric of society, the world of ugly want and insolent riches miscalled civilization, the oppression miscalled order, the error miscalled knowledge. Level its inequalities, repudiate its learnings, break its functions, shatter its chains." The ruthless economic exploitation and political madness are going on in the name of human service and Christianity. The disparity between the rich and the poor widens, entailing fear and danger that if the present situation continues, there is likely to enter a class conflict as an inevitable march of classical capitalism in the long run. And we do not know when and where it will end till it is recast and replaced by another good efficacious system which will efface exploitation at the hands of diabolical few people who now enjoy the fruits of others' labour.

To put it mildly, rather restricted, what Nagas need for the present is, as far as possible, to pass political power to their more competently endowed elder men, if not like Plato's transcendent philosopher-kings, who think in principle for the good of all the Nagas and other persons therein, not in insular terms of particular tribes in order to rise up to Naga personality. Otherwise the Nagas within foreseeable years, will disintegrate—their race, their blood, their habitat, Nagaism and will be assimilated by powerful groups, the process of which has started and will continue if not stopped in a rational way. But Nagaland will have these men as Helvetius said that "every period has its great men, and if these are lacking, it invents them".

Among the Nagas, as already referred, a very small rich class including the feudal squirearchy are incessantly expanding and hatching their eggs. They seem to love property rather than their own souls as exactly what Michaeveli (1469-1527), an Italian

philosopher-statesman in *The Prince*, sets forth: "Men more readily forget the death of a father than the loss of a patrimony". Generally speaking, after the Second World War, Nagas' mentality changed crassly towards materialistic outlook as a criterion of civilization and that they do not mind deeping themselves to set their own sword against their own people for money and power, to bargain some material gains even to the extent, of exceptional selling their own beloved ones. For instance, a poor Naga villager took his mother from his village in the pretension of showing Imphal and sold her to the bridge contractors who in turn placed her alive beneath the foundation of the bridge in superstition that the river god destroys the bridge if he is not appeased by human sacrifice. This evil act has aroused the surge of pathetic human feelings. Sure enough, in this age, when science and technology has so much unveiled the secrets of nature and even carried man to the moon in space, once thought to be impossible, the ignorant persons still reel under strange superstitions. Nevertheless, all these are goaded by spur of sordid poverty yielding to desperate character, not by a test to human love. The Nagas are generally poor from the view of human standards. They are at bare subsistence level, verging upon starvation, scantily clothed, desperately poor housed; the soils for cultivation are limited and the products from land are insufficient to meet the requirements of people in spite of the development activities matched by the State and Central governments.

Another pitiable happening has been unmitigated fast backsliding and deviating of the quintessence of traditional animistic habits, social instinct, hospitality, virtue, decency, dedication, service and nicety under the rapidly encroaching material-mindedness and negative individualism. Traditionally any acquaint or friend passing by, is called in the house and fed with ricebeer. A relative traveller is allowed to stay in the house as guest and a stranger is given shelter or even a criminal running from another village is granted refuge by the villagers. The construction of a house or a paddy field is done by the clan in co-operation. If a man is taken ill and unable to work himself, his field and other works are done by his people. All blood relatives are called to renew relationship in the occasions of merit feasts. Even the Confucian kind of an ethical-moral system of subordination: of the son or daughter to parents, of the younger to the elder, of the wife to the husband and of the subject to the king, has eroded its brightness. And any attempt to change from the old to something new, has come to clash between the traditional and scientific modes of thought, between rural community and urbanisa-

tion. Even the antiquated, well-knitted social institutions, customs and values as well hitherto blazingly respected, are being almost forgotten or paid lip-service or fallen into desuetude, desecration and confused state when they have deteriorated of affluent, educated middle class into a flat concept of "progress," and when young people challenge, sneer at them and seek to replace them by values drawn from the West and other sources while the Western people turn to Eastern religion and culture. For another instance, although most of marriages are still arranged by the parents or relatives, for educated people, marriage by free choice tends more and more to prevail in wider than ever before. The individual considers himself wise and true to find one's mate as he or she likes. Polygamy also becomes known. Divorce is common as well as easy without any strain or stress. Free mingling of the sexes usual in the roots of their society, is to a certain extent, becomes less.

On the other hand, the cultural and blood assimilation with the outsiders, particularly the Aryan Hindus is considerably taking place through the intercourse of commerce, trade, marriage, religion and government without compulsion, causing a meeting point of Nagaism and Hinduism, but breaking off the intactness of their own distinct identity. Yet it is to be guarded that such intercourse does not go in such a manner as to make it uncongenial, low-minded and incongruous. Again, at the bottom, Nagaism is emerging as a powerful rational validity and will take its proper shape in Burkean understanding of the importance of settled institutions, customs and traditions before it falls into complete oblivion and chaos. Now the Meiteis have begun to revive their forefathers' religion—animism (*Sanamahi*, as now known)—identical to that of the Nagas under the patronage of the former Manipur Minister, Laisram Manoubi, a rich businessman and noble nationalist.

Today Nagas from their villages start the process of pouring in countinuous and accelerating train to fast growing, clumsily planned urban towns, cities and purlieus like Kohima, Mokokchung, Dimapur, Imphal, etc. to take up the new way of life, security and better opportunities with the rapid spread of education in their villages, pressure of population growth and escaping from slumbering in the lap of idiocy of rural life and from torture. Paradoxically, these cities are serving as melting pots in which the intercourse of different tribes through English, Assamese, Manipuri and Naga-mese, the last being a mixed language of Assamese and English with different Naga dialects and languages, but a common use in Nagaland as well as even in its Legislative Assembly. They lead to

fusion, though, urban groups adapt the western ideals of life fostered in individualism. Their village life has also been undergoing a rapid change and falling into decay. Yet multitudinous mass of the people (rural groups), say 90 per cent, still live in more than 1000 isolated villages and urban enclaves in the tyrannical grips of ignorance, poverty, squalor, disease in the unproductive slopes of the hills where they primarily pursue their traditional modes of agricultural life despite they go occasionally to work in the towns and cities to eke out their livelihood. There, almost all of them are without much knowledge that the vast world has been reduced to the size of a simple country by the fantastic developments in the systems of transport and communication, annihilating the distances. They also face, to a certain extent, the test of Malthusian theory that growing population inevitably outstrips the food it requires and yields since her native resources, capital and technology are insufficient to maintain the population. Here, in order to solve the problem, the attention of expert economists is needed to be drawn into how the food production is to be increased to the efforts of the economic development plans of the Government.

Again, education is not only increasingly reaching out in revolutionary pace to embrace the entire life-span of the individual and the whole Naga society but also holds the key to a large number of their living problems. Even the most illiterate and poor are beginning to send their girls and boys to schools, colleges because they wish them graciously to be thorough-bred ladies and gentlemen with the good *savoir faire*s, etiquettes, speech and thought, moral and spiritual soundness, leisure, luxury, privilege and a sense of international community. Generally they know that the educated children, when grown up, will get government jobs like those of clerk, officer, teacher, lawyer, doctor, merchant, engineer, technician, etc. or other honourable professions, raise standard of living and have a secure life. The well-to-earn families hire tutors at home for their children. In order to further the cause the educated Naga officials go home on furlough and explain the value of education in modern life to their villagers. But the growth in education of the Nagas is not proportional. The Aos and Tangkhuls are more educated than the other Nagas partly because of the early contacts with the Christian missionaries and loyalty to the British and partly because of the fact that they send their boys and girls to Assam, Manipur, etc., while the Angamis, Chakhesangs, Maos or Shipoumai, Zeliangrongmai, Semas, Rengmas, Lothas, Konyaks, etc., give their thought, mind, money, labour and value to the secessionist

political activities for the freedom of Nagaland from the British time onwards to the present.

Under the stimulus of education through the English language, and others-history, economics, geography, novel, play, poem, hymn, romantic song, movie, science, technology, etc., are striking roots in the primitive minds. Newspapers and periodicals (magazines) are very much 'in'. Literature, theology and philosophy of the West flourish, some of which are translated into Naga languages by Roman script, though almost limited to religion. In this way, the Nagas too are moving to the world of knowledge visualised by Spinoza in the seventeenth century: "The more the mind knows, the better it understands its forces and the order of nature; the more it understands its forces or strength, the better it will be able to direct itself and lay down rules for itself; and the more it understands the order of nature, the more easily it will be able to liberate itself from useless things; that is the whole method."

Some institutions like the Naga Institute of Culture and the Naga Bhasa Parishad (Naga Language Council) to encourage intellectual activity and cultural renaissance in Nagaland have come out. The former headed by Alemchiba does conscientious research in the traditional Naga society and publishes its studies, besides bringing out a biannual bulletin, whereas the latter founded by Yajen Aiyer, a broad-minded Naga, aims at indological and lexicographic research and publication and publishes grammar books, the dictionaries of Hindi-English and Naga dialects, and Mahatma Gandhi's works in different Naga dialects and languages.

On the other hand, modernism of the West and of the East infiltrates more irresistibly and rapidly into the life of the Nagas, making a striking cleavage with the immemorial usages, and gives rise to a state of social stratification and convulsion in the beginning but it has begun to subside more quickly and absorbs solemnly into its pride of Nagaism. Indigenous handicrafts are dying under the competition of cheap imported machine-made goods. Their woven garments are being replaced by imported cotton and woollen made fabrics. Their houses are built in western style and walls decorated by western paintings; they tend to use modern gadgets and products such as radio, jeep, motorcycle, car, machines, drugs, alcohol in regnant fashions. Tea or coffee drinking in place of ricebeer is spreading, however being a foreign habit. Some educated and Christian Nagas call European or Western names in favour of traditional Naga names. The western system of trade and commerce is, no doubt, growing more rapidly than industries and is playing a vital role in

the economic transformation of Nagaland. The western life in pictures, books and films or movies which are exotic and sometimes salacious is impinging profoundly a continuous impact on the simple Naga souls. The plagiarism of the West through these media and contacts unable to adhere to their old-drained ways of life in unreformed manners, is clearly visible and changing the tangled warp and woof of the Naga life into forceful torrent of modernity like the Japanese mentality during the Meiji rule. What actually they want of the West is Leavis' words in *Nor Shall My Sword*, "the vision of our imminent tomorrow is today's America, the energy, the triumphant technology, the productivity, the high standard of living and the life impoverishment—the human emptiness—emptiness and boredom craving alcohol—of one kind or another."

It betokens obviously that Nagaland feels that she has come out of her old worn-out shell; she has shown herself, willing, eager to talk with large humanity although she is too small a part of the world to be recognised; she begins to take a share in the life and activities of the modern age with a little less thinking that there can be no spiritual and cultural growth on the imitation of a foreign culture or civilization only by throwing her own forms completely which she had been for centuries weaved. True, she needs imitation, change, knowledge, wisdom and friendship from every breadth and corner of the globe for transforming the environment, meeting desperate necessity and regenerating conditions of living to a modern life. But what she needs imitation and garnering of knowledge is just to make her life creative, advanced, perfect, cultured and polished in manners, thought and action upon what she has already her own civilization. Whatever different and how antiquated of the root and branch of the order of her society may be as to modern way of life, she should not throw her old values and culture, good and bad altogether. She requires to reform her systems and institutions to suit change of the times and a marriage of the best elements of traditional Nagaism and other extrinsic civilizations. But in whatever way may be, she has to travel a long way and make up much leeway before she occupies her proper place in the van of human civilization. She has to remember what the American poet Emerson warned his countrymen not to imitate or depend too much on European antiquity that Americans did. He writes: "We imitate...Our houses are built with foreign taste; our sheaves are garnished with foreign ornaments; our opinions, the past distant. The soul created the arts whatever they have flourished. It was in his own mind that the artist sought his model. It was an application of his own thought to the thing to be

done and the conditions to be observed...Insist on yourself...Your own gift, you can present every movement with the cumulative force of a whole life's cultivation; but of the adopted talent of another you have only an extempore means half possession." Emerson's warning still holds good even if his time has gone. In this century, the world of internationalism has set in as a vital factor, in which the Nagas are to travel different countries and places, meet different other peoples, talk with them, understand them and learn from them in order to build and live in an orderly, peaceful world community. But "it has to grow," as Jawaharlal Nehru writes in the *Discovery of India*, "out of national cultures and can only flourish today on a basis of freedom and equality and true internationalism".

From the other religious point of view, today the Nagas are converting themselves increasingly into Christianity through the Baptist, Catholic, Presbyterian, Seventh Day Adventist missions, etc. for social, moral and ethical advancement and for modern industrial life. They listen with eagerness to the inscrutable heaven as to what God has done for mankind as narrated in the Bible and in their animism than the complacent Lutheran declaration that 'God Himself cannot do without wise men', and than what science has done through the rational power of human mind based on factual reality and environment. In this way their Christianity immanent in indigenous animism, as the guiding principle of their lives in one form or the other has permeated the whole of Naga society. Surprisingly, many Christian Nagas teach aloud Christianity, fight for its cause, pray whole-heartedly, die and bury with it. But the question of living by its spirit seems sceptic in their intrigued abounding surroundings like the other Christian nationals do. Now, out of the practical human experiences and realities, the fundamental constitution of the modes of the thinking Nagas, consciously or unconsciously begins to speak and see things in the lenses of inexorable science, technology, industry, education, Capitalism, Marxism, Leninism, Indiraism and Maoism along with religion—God. Yet it still stands that any man criticising against the Christian mission work is being dubbed as an unbeliever, anti-Christian and opponent to Christianity.

The church has become a little wealthy corporation with a motto to preaching the threadbare Christianity rather than devoting to Christian education, by which Nagas can be trained into modern Christian civilisation. Sometimes, a very few of them foolishly dip into the discussion and conflict of the European thought in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries in the wake of Renaissance and the

wars of Crusades fought between Christians and Muslims for years, resulting in numerous deaths, ruins and ashes. And the process of proselytization under the guide of Naga Christian leaders in devoid of foreign missionaries from U.S.A., U.K. and Canada but getting their guideline will continue to a point where they realise that Christianity is not the complete answer to a modern scientific life and in the world, the flesh and the devil.

In recent years a slight friction has crept in between the Baptist mission and the Roman Catholics in a disturbing manner if not substantially. The latter which entered into Nagaland in the early 1950s has been progressing by leaps and bounds by means of spreading education and by reaching economic aid to all parts of Nagaland, and by which people are being easily converted into Catholic faith. This rise of Roman Catholicism has put adversely affected the conversion of the Baptist faith which, however, has gone down due to its weak organisation, although, it links with American Baptist mission, U.S.A., when its head evangelists (particularly local) use the money obtained from whatever quarters, for not much creative works, keeping aside the spirit of Christianity even if they take their desirable task to better souls and to make virtue prevail. If the "naked intrusion" of Catholics is not stopped as the Baptist church leaders thought, Nagaland would become a Catholic land in no time. Within the Baptist church, a "revivalist" movement somewhat attached to the Ceylon Pentecostal mission is already ahead. The Sabbath keeping denomination whose headquarters—Washington, DC—also entered into Manipur and Nagaland when its American pastor, Thomas M. Ashlock carried out the proselytizing activities from his first base, Imphal, in between 1951-54 and after whom the Canadian pastor, D.J. Donesky put the foundation firm from 1954 to 57. Now this Adventism is making great strides by virtue of its educational and medical works in Nagaland and Manipur. On the whole, the Christians, animists and others are living side by side in amity and without coming into conflict with one another.

Notwithstanding, the Nagas have to know as Prof. Galbraith, an American economist, in *American Capitalism* writes: "Man cannot live without an economic theology—without some rationalisation of the abstract and seemingly inchoate arrangements which provide him with his livelihood". Not only this, the Nagas should not forget that, in the fast changing world, failure to keep pace with the scientific and technological developments, whatever nations have their past glories, and to introduce much-needed governmental

reforms precipitates its downfall.

A stratum of some sophisticated and heterodox Nagas mostly gentle folk desirous to have voice in what their people think and do, fulminate against the levity of the young people. They also express scepticism about the negative side of religion while traditionalists attack the Christian iconoclasts. But they all appear to be a tiny minority to influence the ignorant masses to the powerful human reason, experience and experiment. Nevertheless, the ideas and ideals are developing slowly synthesizing alive of old and new, and society itself resuscitates to a virtual religious, political, social and economic renaissance, reformation, enlightenment and revolution to build a new Naga civilization, destroying the present effete mentality and old moribund forms of life.

From another social point of view, the traditional treatment of woman is unhealthy, cruel and negligent, though almost equal rights of woman with man are there. Woman is customarily rebuked and whipped by the husband for disobedience and mistake. But woman is fountain stone of human growth, happiness, peace and civilization. When woman is neglected, civilization retards. So, women should be tenderly cared for, honoured and brought up as "they entwine and weave heavenly roses in our earthly life" in the words of Schiller. The State should also educate the young generation well, improve their health, bring about prosperity, harmony in the family and social relationships, respect the cherished values of human life, and enrich the cultural and spiritual heritage.

For all these accounts, is it a better and saner world for the Nagas hitherto? Of course, the answer is both yes and no. However, they are human beings, *homo sapiens* who are, in fact, changing and bettering their attitudes, habits and beliefs, their meaning of life, their goals, values and their responsibilities in the threshold of furious and rapid cycle of historical change and growth, sometimes deliberately and sometimes unexpectedly or without thinking even, in many ways, at an ever-accelerating pace from simplicity to complexity. True, how they are changing individually and collectively and how they are reconciling the life of ancient and modern or the Orient and Occident in a harmonious whole and what caused these winds of change sweeping right across in the land are too complex to attempt for suitable answers, although there is, doubtless, a powerful driving force of cause among other things, summed up in the search of modern life. Today, viewed as a whole, juvenile Nagas have already been set with astonishing amount of creativity, into coming to grips with intellectual, scientific and technological development, progress

and into relentless thinking new in every way out of their old heritage, instinct, desire, religion, philosophy, habit, taste and manner, cult of their home, dress and hair, and occupation.

But we see the good with the bad, the sound and vital with debased and decadent. The cruel, rustic and barbarous quality of the ancient race yields to gales of fear ridden timidity in negative sense and humanity in the positive sense. The diversity in language, customs, culture, etc. is finding the way to a homogeneous cultural unity and prosperity as a sign of growth and civilization all the vogue, yet in a way, hitherto, most of them have seldom been alive to this. In the midst of such changes, there is visible change of their mental make-up too as conditioned by a peculiar set of environment from the good humour, naivety, truth and justice to gloomy, secretive, jaundiced, suspicious, erotic, exploitative, hyperbolic and fractional disposition, and more discernably contaminated, is the habitual liars, in spite of to be ashamed of lying. Consequently, all sorts of flatteries, falsehood, avarice, bad faith and various forms of cheap wit brusquely follow. Good faith and fear of God are becoming increasingly puerile scruples to which a good man is afraid to point out. The healthy development, solidarity and expression of the community has received setback in the utilitarian atmosphere and individual is more concerned with his egoistic advancement than as a keen nostalgia for a healthier society.

Yet the Nagas have their material needs, their ideals and their aspirations much the same as the other peoples all over the universe. They also know that every unhealthy and half-famished affected man cannot have any culture and that every born man must have native needs—good food, raiment, shelter and knowledge under just governmental system—either democracy or totalitarianism—within their soil so varied in form and extent, with prospects of rich economic minerals—as to be discovered and explored. The genial Naga character is still being formed and a sense of identity is something that emerges. As such, “there is an invisible spirit that breathes through a whole people, and is participated by all, though not by all alike; a spirit which gives a colour and character both to their virtues and vices...”

And the road to this direction of life has already been paved by introducing democratic form of government, the development works and new standards of various cultures, by spreading education and by creating an intellectual atmosphere, science, technology and industry in the land; and the present obstacles and chaos will be cleared away in transition. More positively, they put every ounce of

strength into productive thought and work for the country and are now passing from the gale of isolated primitivistic disunity to the plenitude of unity through self-realisation and self-criticism in the historical state of human civilizations. To awaken in the consciousness of people, the idea of oneness and unity, marriage among the tribes also has become encouraged. They sing aloud Sir Walter Scott's poem:

"Breathes there the man, with soul so dead
Who never to himself hath said
This is my own, my native land..."

to mean patriotism in their splendid souls. In essence, the Nagas, through unity and solidarity, sustained power of their efforts for knowledge, Nagaism mingled with other human civilized systems will emerge into the mainstream of India and the rest of the world as "lamp bearers" in Rabindranath Tagore's words in weal and woe and go the way of feelings and aspirations of all mankind before the doomsday comes in our earthly home, following after a great third racial world war in a conflict between the three great powers as prognosticated by a Naga traditional saying; however, according to Isaiah (2:4), *Holy Bible*, human beings, on the contrary,

"shall beat their swords into plowshares,
and their spears into pruning hooks;
nation shall not lift up swords against nation,
neither shall they learn war any more."

Nevertheless, before anything whatsoever happens, the Nagas deserve to pass through the present ordeal and mingle in a form of association of Jean Jacques Rousseau's type, "which will defend and protect with the whole common force the person and goods of each associate, and in which each, while uniting himself with all, may still obey himself alone, and remain as free as before." Anyway, the Nagas are hereafter wished to sing into :

A new lease of world:

Where all the human beings live on and on

As kindred members of family in brotherhood and peace,

Irrespective of race, language, religion and geography;

Where varied resources of the earth

Are produced for humanity;

Where paragon of love, virtue and truth in man

Flows in opulence; and hatred, war

Poverty, exploitation, disease and ignorance disappear;

Where men strive tirelessly for perfection

Of knowledge, goodness, equality, freedom, justice, and happiness in open air.

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